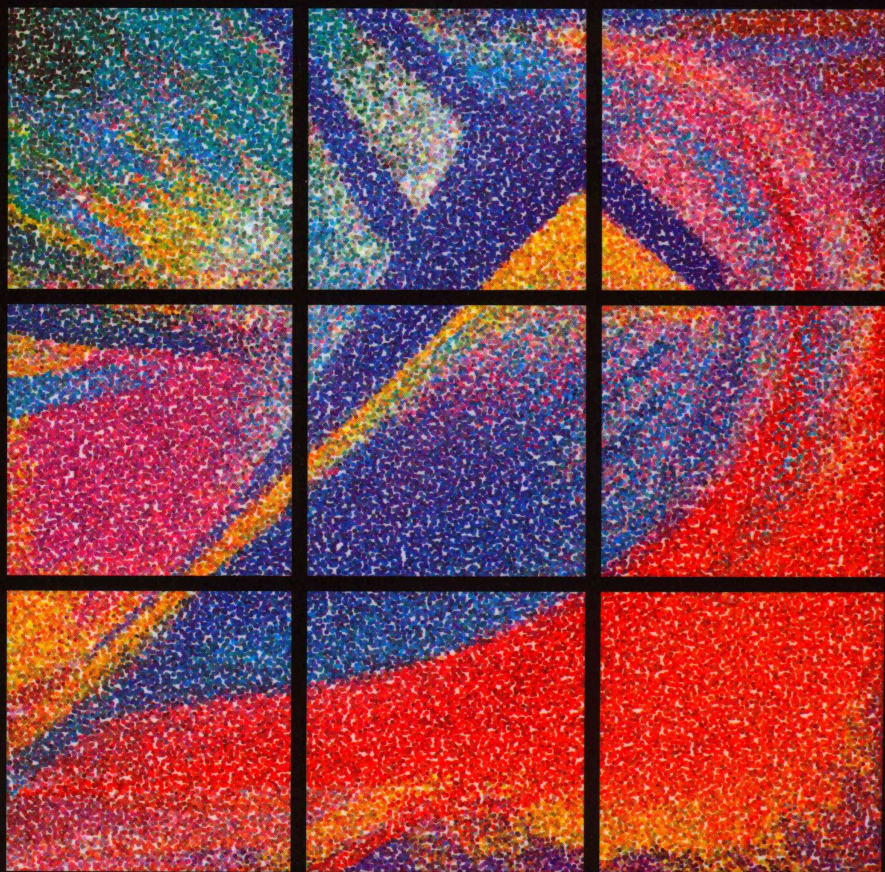


JG BENNETT

CREATION



New foreword by Anthony Blake

Originally published by Coombe Springs Press in 1978.

This is a Bennett Books First Edition

BENNETT BOOKS

P.O. Box 1553

Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

© 1998 The Estate of J.G. Bennett

All Rights Reserved

Printed in the United States of America

01 00 99 98 4 321

Book Design by Amara Pnjansky

Cover Design by Sarah Smiling

Cover Art: "Life Force," 1992. BesbaraJester.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Bennett, John G. (John Godolphin), 1897-1974.

Creation /J.G. Bennett: edited by Anthony Blake.

p. cm. — (Studies from the dramatic universe : no. 3)

Originally published: Sherbome, Glos.: Coombe Springs Press, 1978

Includes Glossary

ISBN 1-881408-08-6 (alk. paper)

1. Cosmology—Miscellanea. 2. Creation—Miscellanea. I. Blake,

A.G.E. (Anthony George Edward) II. Tide III. Series.

BP610.B46114 1998

299' .93-dc21

98-37103

CIP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword to New Edition.....	
Original Foreword	5
<i>The idea of higher worlds; difficulties of speaking and thinking about them; systematic; use of transfinite arithmetic Georg Cantor.</i>	
1. Infinity and Beyond	7
1.1 Transfinite Numbers: Notion of the transfinite; Georg Cantor's perceptions; counting; awareness of individuals; societies; aleph zero, the unique number; infinity of aleph zeros; aleph one, the first transfinite; individual identity; orders of transfinite numbers; aleph two; significance of Adam's power of naming; knowing what things are; metaphysics; the four kinds of number.	
1.2 The Sufic Scheme: Alam-i ajsam; the universe is probably finite; all existence is limited and measurable; alam-i arwab; the spirit life; difference between essence and personality; the dream condition; the two rascoamos; fanai afal; alam-i imkan; consciousness; cosmic or aleph consciousness; samadhi; nirvana or Labiit; the plenum	
1.3 Scheme of the Dramatic Universe; The For Worlds; transfinite reality; fanai zat	
1.4 Beyond Satori; example ofriiyu prana meditation; difference between first and second worlds; Scholastic description of uniqueness of angels; satori as change in kind of consciousness; there is no "I"; nature of soul in ordinary man; the body kesdjan; nature of samadhi; example from Meister Eckhart; explanation of Shivapuri Baba; the third world is transcondous; paradise belongs in the second world.	
Editor's Note: The Three Tetrads; Will and being; the twelve term system of materiality, vitality and deity; the distinction ofariipa and riipa.	
2. Deity.....	22
2.1 Images of Deity: the visible field of wheat and the invisible source of food; the image of the source for hunting-people; the meaning of God for us; images of God; the world of limitless being is without the defects of existence.	
2.2 The Substance of Images: some people have really entered the second world; it is more substantial than the first; images are really there; the true image comes from beyond existence; need to see that the spiritual can enter the material; limitation of notion that God exists; there is a spiritual presence in the world.	
2.3 Existence: condition of separation; existence is all possibilities; what can happen is very limited; kenosis and the Incarnation; Christ was limited by his existence.	
2.4 Limitless being; difference between existence and being; the spirit world; still a world of form; Arjuna's terror at the sight of Krishna beyond form; gradations of being in the second world; nature spirits; the demiurgic intelligence; incarnations; God as the great being.	

- 2.5 *Transfinite Reality: place a/impossibilities; the Work is impossible; we cannot but must remember ourselves; the third world is outside of causality; difference between justice and compassion; regulating power of the demiurges is not compassionate; the two Gnostic Gods; ineffable God.*
- 2.6 *Sacred Images: incarnations are events beyond understanding; sacred images provide a connection; the Islamic image of God; sacred images can appear in actuality in the world; experiencing the presence of Mary; realizing the nothingness from which things come.*
- 2.7 *The Unfathomable: source of Will; all questions cease; the relativity of the experience of nothingness; f ana.*

3. Vitality.....33

- 3.1 *The Cosmic Life Principle: what is life and why is life?; mechanistic view of evolution; no way of proving or disproving the action of higher intelligence; life seen from the perspective of mind; search for a rupa of life is inconclusive; universality of life; autonomy; the Cosmic Life Principle.*
- 3.2 *Life as Reconciliation: Life is neither creative power nor passive matter; Life reconciles the two; the role of the Schools of Alexandria in formulating the Christian Creed; the Holy Ghost as Lord and Giver of Life; people are intended to be conscious manifestations of the third force; the universe is becoming alive.*
- 3.3 *Life as a Tetrad: Nature; the existence of Life and the essence of life; for modes of vitality; we are alive in four ways; our natural body; incarnation; feeling towards the unconditioned state; the mystery of life; in an incarnated state it is not possible to have unbroken awareness of the unconditioned state; awareness of the conditioned and the unconditioned at the same time; the fourth level as source of potentialities; the Great Life Force.*
- 3.4 *Supernatural and Natural Life: Life the counterpart in being of Individuality in Will; source of perfect individuality is in the Transfinite Reality; unconditioned states of being are a projection in limitless being; the higher being body; the universal soul; in the unconditioned states are demiurges and three natured beings; the conditioned state and selfhood; man lives in the place of balance of the whole creation; Nature is existential life; the living matrix; male and female powers of life; the trogoautoegocrat.*

Discussion: Spirit bodies; man's role in life; meaning of individuality.

4. Materiality.....42

- 4.1 *Nature of Materiality: the material as denial of the spiritual and as the inert state; different nature of life; matter cannot be entirely subject to causal laws; difference between materiality and energies and qualities; materiality is what is less than living; gradations of materiality; the four states.*
- 4.2 *Predictability: aim of science and technology is to eliminate uncertainty; limits of predictability; probably there are no absolute laws.*
- 4.3 *Perversity: elementals; spirits of materiality; power of gold some elementals*

hostile to life; beneficial elementals; perversity of inanimate objects.

4.4 *The Usable and the Edible: not all matter can be transformed; food; usable matter; works of art; thinghood.*

4.5 *Materiality as Denial: the totality of situations without intrinsic reconciliation; three aspects; Satan; the four grades; death and evil.*

Discussion: The formless; mystery of life; true evolution goes into the dark; contradictions between different roles of God disappear in the formless world; the danger of beauty; jazz; the perfection of form; Brother AM and Brother Sez; Ouspensky's idea of great matter; elementals; Manichaeism; Acts of God; the creative power does not require order; why did God create the world?

5. Creation of Life 55

The myth of Genesis; role of the Elohim; creation is partition and blending.

5.1 *The Nonmaterial Domain: the describable and the indescribable; the four nonmaterial regions treated as stages; difference between All Existence and Universe.*

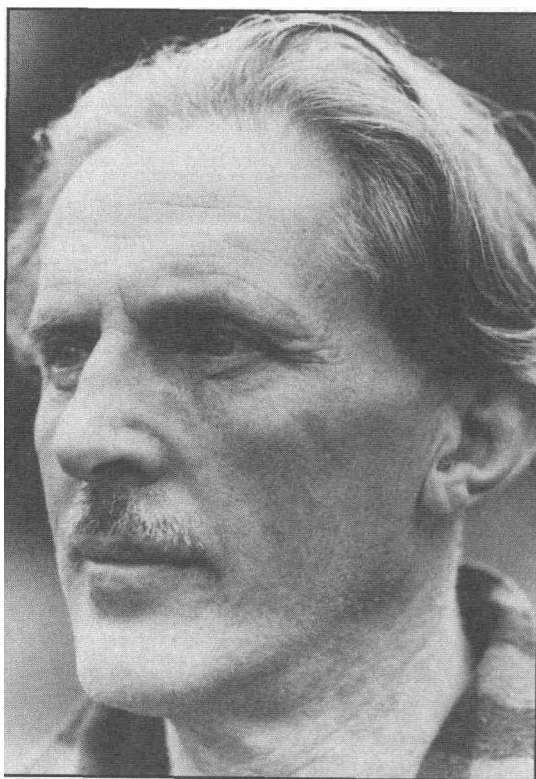
5.2 *From the Universe to Life: Cosmic concentrations; distinction of whole and part; illustration of power of attenuation from homeopathy; galaxies and suns; Sun as denterocosmos; the Heavenly Host between Sun and Earth; the Sun as creator of life; The Heavenly Host exist in the Spirit World and are invisible; characteristics of intelligence.*

5.3 *Life and Materiality: influence of the planets; Earth as Mother of Life; three meanings of a planet; the sevenfold structure of life creation; Earth as Life's Prison; Nature loves us; the play of Wisdom; isolation and the "moon."*

6. Evolution..... 66

Seeing the whole; revelation of the history of one planet; demiurgic intelligence; plan of making the earth a scene of intelligence; inert state of primitive earth; activation; the foundation of an active surface; the coming of the cell; soil, vegetation and invertebrates; need to concentrate sensitive energy; beginning of spiritualization of the earth; image of man already in the sexual cell; the enneagram of evolution; inner connections; sex as an anticipation of man.

Discussion: Energy medium required for intelligent operations; irrelevance of ideas of special creation; impossibilities of verifying reality of higher worlds by demanding evidence; action of the higher needs an intermediary; people do not understand the significance of thought forms; the triad of the enneagram: energy, life, spirit; the vision of life came 'from above'; will sex be transcended in future evolution; impossible under planetary conditions; we should not try to pin down glimpses of higher worlds; responsibility being transferred to man from demiurge; current problems easily solved by slight change in attitude; Gurdjieffs scheme of objective reason; parallels with Buddhism; significance of the universal teaching; three kinds of reason; are the demiurges jealous of man; Iblis in the Quran; according to Gurdjieff the fall of man was due to limitations of the demiurge, not to malevolence; cosmic need for compassion.



John Bennett, circa 1964

**"When one looks at nature one is convinced
that the creative power is fanciful and has a sense of humor."**

FOREWORD TO NEW EDITION

*"The nature of infinity is this: That every thing has its
Own vortex; and when once a traveller thro' Eternity
Has pass'd that Vortex, he perceives it roll backward behind
His Path, into a Globe itself unfolding, like a sun,
Or, like a moon, or like a universe of starry majesty,
While he keeps onwards in his wondrous journey on the Earth,
Or, like a human form, a friend with whom he liv'd benevolent.
As the eye of man views both the East and the West, encompassing
Its vortex, and the North and South with all their starry host,
Also the rising sun and setting moon he views, surrounding
His corn-fields and his valleys of five hundred acres square.
Thus is the Earth one infinite plane, and not as apparent
To the weak traveller confin'd beneath the moony shade.
Thus is the Heaven a Vortex pass'd already, and the Earth
A Vortex not yet pass'd by the traveller through Eternity"*

—William Blake, from Milton

Looking back over twenty years at the material gathered in this small book, I am amazed at its originality and depth. Bridging between the two domains of spirituality and science (or mathematics), it generates new insights on every page. It is living proof of Bennett's contention that the "third world" over-rides all the distinctions we are habituated to make, transcending them in every instant, always "ahead of our minds" (as William Blake suggests). Once a connection has been made with this world, nothing ever remains the same. It is perpetually new.

Bennett set himself the task of finding ways of communicating to people the insights which were constantly being born in him. He explored different terminologies, created a variety of images and experimented with forms of expression. He did not remain within the corpus of Gurdjieffs teachings. Everything was "grist for the mill" The "other worlds" were not far away in some trance-like state but engaged in the immediate reality at hand.

Mathematicians such as Cantor and Godel accessed the third world. Cantor was driven into an asylum by the rejection and obstruction of his colleagues

and Godel lived in relative isolation for most of his life since he could find no one to talk to. Bennett brought their insights into the public forum and quietly and with lucidity explained what they might mean to people without any special training.

When I compiled this material from transcripts, I had to work very hard at turning the flow of exposition into a written text and I regret that certain things were not made as clear as they could be. I know from experience how hard it is to speak about such things, retaining an inner contact with the reality, while maintaining a full and coherent memory of all that has been already said. This is particularly true of the first part of *Creation*, dealing with the analogy between Cantor's transfinite numbers and the Sufi scheme of four worlds, and the following may help.

At first, the idea of "infinity" seems far away. In fact, the transfinite numbers may be more immediately present in our experience than the "ordinary" numbers. Ideas of the One, the All, the Whole, the Everything—alluded to by Gurdjieff in his series *All and Everything*—are poised between the crude simplicity of counting and the subtle immediacy of quality. The transfinite can be taken as a symbolism for qualities of experience, associated with different attitudes. When we shift in attitude, we are shifting worlds. I look at a person as an object, as a body or personality, and then in a moment I catch a glimpse of them as they are. I enter the realm that Buber called "I-Thou." The person is no longer an item in a collectivity but a unique individual, with transfinite depth. If I then participate in a "group" of individuals, I enter a further world, a higher order still of the transfinite. This is the essence of what David Bohm called "dialogue."

The higher worlds are not ineffable. Everything that is real can be said. Only, we may not make the connection. Before there existed the language of modern mathematics, many aspects of human experience were relegated to the provenance of the mystics. It was of burning concern for Bennett that we are now in a world mind capable of articulating the nature of, for example, "higher intelligence" that previously was not possible. So, with our ideas of God or Deity. Gurdjieff himself had ventured into formulating new concepts of God and Bennett followed in his footsteps—though not by imitation. It is just not true that "God" has to be some vague feeling in us.

The reason for this is that the idea of God is connected with our ideas of "transcendence" or "going beyond." As ideas, or images, they can be researched and improved. We are responsible for the images that form in us about God—which can both inhibit and liberate. Throughout the world, people are engaged in communications in which different images, and even different kinds of images, are at work; and only rarely are these images brought to consciousness. As a consequence, the idea of God becomes a "bone of contention," leading to misunderstanding, hatred and violence.

Bennett had a remarkable appreciation of all the variety and complexity of reality. He had a feeling for life and matter that could never let him reduce them to some "inferior" status, subsumed under higher principles. Here belongs

the problematic, barely known, dimly seen possibilities of a total vision that eludes us at every turn. Creation is rich beyond measure and we do not even begin to see what it entails. Gurdjieff struggled to say that it is not divided from the creator, yet is not the creator. Every part of reality participates in the whole as best it can. Again, the image of dialogue may help us to grasp what this means. There is more than matter and energy—as Gurdjieff first taught—and everything has its own "voice."

The scheme of Sufi worlds was clarified for Bennett through his contact with Hasan Shushud, a proponent of the extreme *itiaq yolu*, or way of absolute liberation. Shushud was called to the fourth world of the *lahut*, the unfathomable in Bennett's terminology beyond any knowledge or distinctions, beyond creation, a "nothingness" of transcendent energy.

Throughout this book, the tetrad or four-term system recurs again and again. The stage had been set in Bennett's *The Dramatic Universe** (see Vol. II in particular). Whereas Gurdjieff had restricted himself to the three- and seven-term systems, Bennett explored other possibilities. The tetrad or quaternary is ubiquitous in human traditions. Its essential connotation is that of the "matrix" or mother and it has come into human life in a strong way through Carl Jung and some psycho-sociologists such as Lacan. The step from three to four being undertaken, however unconsciously, in the Church with the rise of the significance of Mary has tremendous implications. The triad cannot create, only relate. Creation has to be four-fold.

For those unfamiliar with this method of systematics, it is useful to see what is involved as contemplation. In contemplation, we look at different areas of experience according to the same form. This allows experience to take shape in us in new ways. In origin, this practice belongs to the third world, so that at first it may be hard to grasp what is going on. What it does is to reshape our images and enable us to consciously participate in their formation.

Creation ends with a short discussion of evolution on earth and raises the question of whether higher intelligence can operate without compassion. Bennett confesses that he does not know. This is a serious question, for it concerns the nature of what it is that is "in charge" of the evolutionary process on earth and whether this evolution is "for the good."

—Anthony Blake
Gretton, England 1998

ORIGINAL FOREWORD

One of the most important and revolutionary ideas presented in *The Dramatic Universe* is that man lives in many worlds, worlds divided from each other not by distance—as would be the case for distant stars—but by existing under quite different kinds of laws. It is our existing under quite different kinds of laws. It is our existence in many worlds that makes human transformation possible but also the kind of experience we have, multidimensional and bewildering in its complexities and uncertainties. The idea of many worlds is a commonplace in all ancient traditions, but it has been forgotten in the last millennium where man has driven to explore what is really a flatland in space and time, however vast the distances and durations that are contained in it. The postulate of many worlds is more fundamental than the postulate of deity or of higher powers. If there are sources of a higher order than man then they must exist, or subsist, in worlds which are not like that in which our bodies move. The thought that this puts them outside of our world and therefore that they are apart or separated is a projection of the character of space-time onto a region which is not subject to them. The transcendental character of higher worlds is more akin to the meta-systems which are required to give validity to finite mathematical systems. Godel, the major discoverer of this property, is as much a prophet of a new understanding of spirituality as he is a creative power in understanding mathematical formalism. He exemplifies something that Bennett constantly pointed to: that science and mathematics in our time are truly the equivalent of the manifestations of the age of revelation. But few have read the signs and seen the pattern of the revelation—which is a new understanding of man's role in a complex and expanding universe riddled through and through with uncertainty and giving evidence of the coexistence of different worlds. Instead, the discoveries have led to further human self-aggrandizement.

To give expression to the insight into many worlds is a very difficult task. Existing language can hardly convey the notions that are required. The result has often been a romantic "theosophical" image of higher regions that offends the scientific discrimination and fails to account for the barriers that separate us from different modes of experience. We have to take account of the fact that the experience of the vast majority, but to an even greater degree our thinking, is almost wholly that of the material-determined world. The theme of human blindness even to what is at hand in the working of human nature was extensively described and analyzed by Gurdjieff but the all-important practical side of this cannot be discussed here. It is enough to say that there are those who not only

come to give report of higher worlds but also to provide ways of entering into them. This was part of Bennett's task, as it was Gurdjieffs.

In this book, Bennett gives us his vision of the worlds relevant to the experience of man. Though he draws heavily on the structural principles of systematics which were elaborated in the course of writing *The Dramatic Universe*, *at every turn he brings us back to experience; what is it to exist, what kinds of consciousness are there, what are the possibilities of number, what is the essence of relationships, what is the essence of life?* The material is at every hand, and we do not need telescopes or microscopes to gather esoteric data; it is in our dreams and our feelings, in our breath and in the patterns that bring us together. But always; "those who have eyes to see, let them see!" cannot be denied.

Bennett's purpose here is to show how the different worlds can be thought about. His first task is to enable us to form some representation of worlds beyond finite experience—the transfinite regions. Drawing heavily on the transfinite arithmetic of Georg Cantor he takes us towards a new understanding of human uniqueness and the qualitative infinity of human society to illustrate the cosmological scheme of the four worlds out of which all creation comes.

He goes on to show that the meaning of God is four-fold, different in the four underlying worlds. This is enough to establish a quite new theology, but his purpose is to lead us further into a new understanding of deity, vitality, and materiality. In one grand sweep, all that is is encompassed and the special quality of being of each conveyed. His technique of expression is based throughout on the distinction between the conditioned and the unconditioned, *rupa* and *arupa*, and he uses this to show the various facets of God, life and materiality.

His vision is of a universe coming alive and of a great work of reconciliation penetrating into the uncertain region between the material and the spiritual.

The second discussion section includes references to Bennett's scheme of energies which is not explicitly discussed in the text. The interested reader can pursue this scheme in Bennett's book. *Energies: Material, Vital, Cosmic*, * said he can read about Gurdjieff's in Ouspensky's books. *In Search of the Miraculous* and *The Fourth Way*. The discussion is included because it throws light from another direction on the three domains of the creation.

The two final chapters adopt a different perspective from the earlier ones. The first of them deals with the structure of limitation by which the creation arises out of the unfathomable source. In this chapter, we see the meaning of life as an independent creation.

A commentary is added to help explain certain of the difficult ideas. The final chapter deals with the evolution of life and is followed by a discussion section that deals with how we can understand the action of higher intelligence.

—Anthony Blake, 1977

INFINITY AND BEYOND

We need to look beyond existence in order to understand existence. The existing world may be indefinitely large but what is beyond existence is truly infinite. People confuse the very large with what is transfinite, that is, beyond the realm of counting. So we have to grasp that going on and on in time and space is a property that is existential and does not bring us into the unconditioned world.

Through the work of one of the greatest mathematical geniuses of all time, Georg Cantor, who lived in the nineteenth century, we can form some conception of the transfinite. Cantor had a higher consciousness. Quite a bit of his time was spent in a mad-house. He went out of this world. When he came back he did mathematics that nobody else had ever thought of doing and he saw things he was not able to describe. He was not understood and hardly anything was recorded of what he said while in super-conscious states. He saw that there was another world where everything was transfinite but not all of the transfinite was transfinite in the same way. What he did manage to express can be grasped in terms of our ordinary experience if we can look at it in a certain manner.

1.1 Transfinite Numbers

The first thing to get hold of is how ordinary counting ignores individuality. Say there is a meeting of a group of people. We are interested in checking that everyone is present in the room. We can count and find out whether someone is missing but this does not tell us anything about who is missing. Let there be thirty-two chairs in a room and we have counted only thirty-one people. We wait and then another person enters the room. Now there are thirty-two people and all the chairs are occupied.

The situation is quite different when we distinguish ourselves as individuals. This brings before us something of a quite different order. Each one of us is so much more than can be discerned by ourselves or by anyone else. The individual has a wealth of content that we can never get to the bottom of. The "extension in depth" of the individual is something that cannot be reached by any way of enumeration. It has to do with whether or not he is entitled to come to the meeting or belongs to the group.

When we have taken individuality into account we can make a further step and realize what the group of people is as a society. We look at the various ways that the thirty-two individuals can work together. They can work in pairs, in

threes and so on. All these combinations in which a given individual enters are quite different from those in which he does not enter. With only 32 people, the possible number of combinations is astronomical, of the order of 10,000 million. If there had been a different combination formed every hour since the time of Adam (37,000 years ago) this would have realized only a tiny fraction of the possibilities.

The very quality of our thinking must change as we go from the world of bodies to the world of individuals and then to the world of society. It is much more than a change of quantity of number.

Let us take an unlimited situation. People keep on coming into the room. As long as we do not have to worry about who it is that is coming in all we have to do is make a count—as is done with turnstiles in certain public places like the zoo. No matter how large the count becomes, one more is just one more. If we had a million people and one more came, we would have a million and one people.

There is no final number we can reach by the process of counting one more; just as however rarefied the air becomes beyond the earth's surface, it is not possible to say: "Here air stops and there is no more air beyond." A molecule can always go beyond that point or one enter from a larger space. There is no boundary where air stops and nothingness begins.

Nevertheless we can form some mental picture of the result of counting indefinitely, even though it is utterly unattainable in practice. This is the number which cannot be added to anymore: the "infinite cardinal number" that Cantor called Aleph Zero X_0 . X_0 is quite different in its nature from any large number N . There can always be a number $N + 1$, no matter how large N is; but there is no such number as $X_0 + 1$ that is any different from X_0 itself.

X_0 is not very large, it is endless. This gives it a uniqueness that very large numbers do not have. We could believe that X_0 is the only unique number, but as we shall see, this is not so. X_0 is unique and single looked at from the side of ordinary numbers. Because we look at it from the side of finite numbers it is given the subscript zero: it represents the threshold of the true transfinite region. We are also able to look at X_0 from the transfinite side and then what its uniqueness means is different.

There is a place for this extraordinary unique number X_0 in ordinary mathematical operations. If we divide any number by zero, the result is X_0 , not any countable number N . Aleph-zero is the first genuine infinity. It cannot be increased or diminished by addition or subtraction. It is not arrived at by counting but by thinking, such as making the thought of the result of "adding without stopping" which obviously goes right outside the realm of possible practice.

X_0 has a uniqueness that the ordinary numbers of our counting do not have: 1,000 is $999 + 1$, we get to it by adding to other numbers; all the ordinary numbers are got by counting and counting is such that all ways of counting reduce to the same. With X_0 we enter the realm of individuality. It is possible

to arrive at infinity in different ways.

We can get at it by adding all the numbers 1,2,3 etc. together. We can also get to it by adding just the even numbers 2,4,6 etc. The result in both cases is X_0 ; but the second X_0 is certainly divisible by 2, whereas the first may or may not be so divisible, it is indeterminable. There is also an X_0 which consists only of the prime numbers—numbers which are only divisible by themselves—which is quite different from the other two.

It does not make sense to add an X_0 to another X_0 . Adding the same one to itself does not change anything; it means no more than adding a cow to itself means anything. Adding two different X_0 's together would be like trying to add a cow to yesterday morning! The realm of X_0 corresponds more to the world of concrete situations than to the world of abstract objects. When one works with these numbers, there is a strange feeling for their individuality. An X_0 is so much itself that it is totally unlike an ordinary number. The feeling is rather like that people have for the prime numbers which are not divisible by other numbers: they appear to be, one can say, more "noble" than the others. One must remember that a million times infinity is still infinity. A million times a cow is still that cow.

In fact, there are an infinite number of ways of arriving at X_0 . This can be put in another way: there is an infinitude of unique X_0 's. That infinity of infinities, or infinity beyond infinity, is Cantor's transfinite region. The field that contains all the aleph-zeros and all that can be done with them. is called the "first transfinite," X_1 .

If we really look at people and not merely take them as bodies to be counted, then we are looking at aleph-zeros. We have to take into account how each person is arrived at: what is their background, how did they come to be here? Each person is unique, arrived at in a way that is different from any other individual. There is a marvelous similarity between the infinite numbers and individual people. That is why learning about people requires a different sort of thought process from that of statistics or counting how many.

When we identify the people in a group, when we recognize them and see them as individuals belonging to the group, we make a step equivalent to passing into the world of X_1 . It is much more important that we are who we are than that we are so many. We do experience a strange feeling in passing from contemplation of the human race as more than three thousand million units to seeing it as three thousand million individual human beings. Ordinary numbers disregard identity. If we say a hundred eggs, we are disregarding whether these eggs are large or small, duck's eggs or hen's eggs. When we take into account the individual identity of the eggs, another dimension is added. In an egg there is the genetic pattern of a possible hen. This pattern has enormous variety so that no two identical eggs have ever been laid. Certainly no two identical people have ever been conceived.

In ordinary arithmetic, we do not have to consider which infinity we are using. All that matters is that there is an infinity. In this sense, X_0 has no content

and that is why it is given the zero subscript. It is infinity in a line and ordinarily we do not have to take into account the unique character of the given "line." X_0 is the uncountable number of points in a line no matter whether the line is large or small, or the number of points are within any area or any volume. Where we take the individuality of X_0 into account is in the transfinite region, beyond the reach of counting.

The field of all aleph-zeros is X_1 . When we look at this field as a society, we have to take into account the possibilities of combination, just as we did with the group of 32 people. Then we come to a further transfinity, X_2 : the "societies" of X_1 . All possible individuals can act together. Remembering the enormous increase of magnitude we found in taking into account unique combinations of people, it is clear that something of quite different order is brought in with X_2 .

It would be wrong to think of X_1 as infinity raised to infinity. This notion does not convey what is essential—that a different order of reality has been entered. The change is almost entirely qualitative. Again, when we enter the world of X_2 something new comes into effect, where the arrangements or patterns of individuals together are realized. It is useless to think of this in terms of the number of patterns—even though I introduced that idea to give a starting point. The patterns have an additional power of their own, different in kind from that of individuals.

If we think of the arrangement of furniture in a room, it would not ordinarily occur to us to represent this by a number. It is obviously something that cannot be reached by counting. We are speaking now about a real situation, not one in which we have, say, a set of identical balls to be arranged in a checkerboard with so many holes. When it matters which ball we are taking—that is, every ball is an individual—and there is no finite framework which imposes its limitations on possible arrangements, we have the world of X_2 . It is everything that is possible in all possible ways to be together. We can see in the example that where the balls are identical we have the world of counting and where their arrangements are limited, we have what corresponds to the framework-conditions. We can count where there are identicals, name -where there are individuals and we can do something quite different from counting **or** naming where there are orders.

The notion of naming has very ancient origins. In the Quran, the point is made very strongly that man was given this power which was not given to the angels. Why was it that because this was given to man, the angels worshiped him or were, like Iblis or Satan, jealous of him? Iblis revolted and refused to accept that a being who could do such harm should be given such a power. The privilege accorded to man in being able to name things was being able to see things for what they are. That is, not to see things from outside and recognize them by their signs.

When we ask the question: "Who?" it is totally different from : "How many?" Ramana Maharshi said: "If you ask yourself "Who am I?" and persist in

this question, you will attain to a different consciousness of reality." This is true. You can get to knowing things as they are in themselves.

In *The Principia Mathematica*, published about sixty years ago, which was an attempt to find the foundations of mathematics, Russell and Whitehead saw that the principle of numbering is simply that there should be signs of recognition according to classes. We know the signs by which to distinguish a human body from a chair or a cushion and therefore we are able to count them. That was sufficient before the time of Adam. From the time of Adam it was no longer sufficient. But we almost entirely deal with people without taking their individuality into account, simply by labeling. That is not how man was intended to be.

There is knowing from the outside and knowing through and through.* Knowing from the outside can be increased by knowing more. Knowing from the inside cannot be increased. It is not a question of being more conscious, but possibly even being less conscious, certainly of oneself. The difference corresponds with Gurdjieff's distinction between the "reason of knowing" and the "reason of understanding."** There is knowing what things do and knowing what things are. We are accumulating vast amounts of knowledge about living beings but we are no nearer knowing what life is.

If we then go on to ask: "Where do we belong? What is our place? What is this life for?" we make a step very much like going from X_0 to X_1 . These questions lead us towards what is called dharma: destiny, where it all comes from, where it is all going.

For the most part, people are contented to abandon questions of a higher order and think it is a sufficient achievement to be able to answer questions of the kind, "how many?" This is the kind of question with which natural science is occupied. In Aristotle's scheme, all such questions belonged to what he called "physics"—*physis* or the "natural." He said that beyond physics there were other questions to do with metaphysics, after the natural. Then people made the mistake of trying to answer this second kind of question with the help of the first kind of question. The idea that if we can answer the first kind of question that will help us to answer the second is quite mistaken.

Cantor tried to see beyond X_2 but as far as we know did not come to anything. We therefore have four kinds of conditions.

N Countable numbers, large and small, the character of which is entirely quantitative.

X_0 Infinite numbers which cannot be increased or decreased by any operation.

X_1 Transfinite numbers, where the uniqueness of infinite numbers—how they are generated—is contained. The arithmetic of transfinite numbers is closer to psychology than to the arithmetic we are familiar with.

*cf! *The Dramatic Universe*, Vol. 1, Chapter 5: Bennett Books, 1998.

**"Form and Sequence", *AH and E-ver'thing*: Two Rivers Press: 1993, pp. 1166-9

- X2 "Ultimate" number. Everything that can be said about individuals and societies of individuals. All that is possible in any way whatsoever. The individuals here are not actual but possible. All actual individuals are limited.

1.2 The Sufic Scheme

It was this scheme of four realms that was before me in writing *The Dramatic Universe*. At that time, I did not know about another system of representation which now interests me very much and points to exactly the same reality: I refer to the Sufi teaching on the different worlds. The Sufi scheme is remarkably close in its essential features to that of Georg Cantor.

1. The *Alam-i ajsam*: the "world of bodies."

This is a world of quantities. Lord Kelvin, a great but very limited physicist of the nineteenth century, said that what we cannot measure we cannot know. This amounts to saying that all we can know are bodies. What distinguishes bodies from nonbodies is that the former are separate from each other. Whatever the body is, its existence is a separation. It is obvious that we cannot expect from this world any kind of unlimited experience. It is a world that can be counted, a world that corresponds to $\aleph_0$. Even if we consider the total number of ultimate *d v* particles in the universe, as Eddington did, it is possible to form some estimate of them (Eddington's calculation gave 2^{250}). This is a fantastic number; but we can still add one more and make a difference. It is in the nature of this incarnated or bodily existence that everything is limited and we deal in finite numbers.

There are plenty of reasons for supposing that the universe itself is limited. It would be hard to understand how things could be as they are if they were not finite.

Everything that exists—large and small, distant, past, present or future—is subject to the law of separateness and therefore is measurable and countable. There are bodies and the energies which make up the nonindividualized ways in which bodies can relate. Besides the limitations of space and time there are potential states and interactions, but these are also through and through quantitative.

2. The *alam-i arwah*: the "world of spirits."

When we escape from the world of bodies it is no longer possible to say whether we are separated or not separated from our bodies. In a psychological exercise when it has gone very deep, it is not right to say: "Oh, I am separated from my body." That is quite meaningless. The experience is of floating in ourselves and we cannot say whether we are in our bodies or out of our bodies, as St. Paul said: "Whether in the body or out of the body, I know not." St. Paul put it in that way to enable people to recognize the authentic experience in themselves.

This experience corresponds to the transition from limited numbers to X_0 . It is a transition from the world of bodies, the *alam-i ajsam* to the world of spirits *alam-i arvah*. Spirits are not limited in the way bodies are. It is not possible to say whether the spirit life ends or does not end. The thing to grasp is that the separateness of the world of bodies is taken away and a different mode of existence comes.

But although X_0 is limitless, it cannot get beyond itself. It is itself and nothing else and there is no way of turning it into something else. Every X_0 is complete. We cannot add anything to change its character. If that can be understood, then something of the strange state of existence in the second world can be grasped.

The distinction between the first and the second worlds is like the one we try to make between essence and personality. Essence is a name for the depth of ourselves and personality a name for our separateness in the world of bodies. Essence is limitless and unique; in other words it is like the first kind of infinite number X_0 .

One reason why the second world is not the end is that there is nothing that can change the individual X_0 . If we wish to be something more than what we are, we have to go beyond the world of spirits.

If we are stuck in the spirit world we cannot be otherwise than our dreams. People who are fixed in the spirit realm when they die, form a whole world around them. They are quite convinced that they are living in an ordinary world with their friends and other people who have died. We can know this because it is possible to communicate with people in that state. They may even be able to recognize real things because part of them is really there. What neither they, nor the people who attach importance to communicating with them, see is that they are prevented from making further progress. They are not able to enter the third world where transformation is possible. They cannot leave things behind.

To go forward into the next world much has to be left behind. I know that if I leave my thoughts behind, I can get through. In reality, this is not a real loss: it is not so terrifying as it seems, to leave the personality behind.

Gurdjieff expressed this in terms of the two *rascooarnos*. In the first, the physical body is left behind, the principle of separateness. In the second it is not so much a leaving behind of personality as such, but the "residue" of personality that attaches us to forms and prevents us from reaching a formless state.

Once this is understood, our whole attitude towards the personality can change and we can begin in a genuine way to look upon it as expendable.

Most people do not look upon even their physical body as expendable. They want to go on living and do not want to leave their body behind—unless they are in a state of despair and want to leave everything and just cease to exist. For the most part, we rely on the physical body to assure

us of something real. This is an upside-down situation. What the body is is a limitation of our perceptions.

The second rascocarno is given the name in Sufism *fanai afal*. It is detachment from all activities or "doing" (*afal* plural of *fil*, action). One is no longer dependent on anything that one does, that one feels, thinks and realizes. All such things remain within the *Xo*.

3. The *alam-i imkan*: the "world of possibilities."

Everything here is beyond infinity; it is X1. We can look at this in terms of consciousness. There is more or less consciousness; this is measurable. We can see that when we wake up in the morning we are more conscious than when we are asleep. During the day, our consciousness fluctuates and sometimes we observe ourselves and sometimes we do not. When we observe ourselves there is a consciousness beyond our awareness of what is going on. We can sometimes experience another degree of awareness in which we are aware that there is awareness of what we are thinking and doing. So we can picture more and more consciousness, consciousness building up, but always the consciousness that is conscious-of. This corresponds to N.

Then a change can come when we are no longer conscious of anything but there is just consciousness without any limitations. This is the transition to *Xo*. It is popularly called "cosmic consciousness" and *Xo* is a very good symbol for it. Sometimes the term "aleph-consciousness" is used derived from the Kabbalistic system. When someone enters this state, he is aware that there are no limits and that he knows everything; and he is bound to feel that he has reached the ultimate state. He may even be convinced that he will always be in that state, but then returns to the ordinary condition and retains only a memory of "having known everything."

It is possible, however, to realize that one knows everything in a particular perspective. There can be detachment from the cosmic consciousness and something can happen that is no longer consciousness as we know it. This is called in Sanskrit samadhi. This brings us into the third world.

The transition includes detachment from oneself. One's individuality becomes quite different: it is unique, but every individuality has the same value. This is the world of X1.

4. Beyond this is a fourth world: called nirvana in Buddhism and *labut* in Sufism.

When I was writing about this in *The Dramatic Universe*, I called it the unfathomable.

The word *labut* commonly means the boundless, and is often used for the ocean; *la* means "without" or "negation." Jakob Bohme used the word *Ungrund* meaning that which had no ground to support it which is the ground of everything else. One can say neither it is empty nor that it is full. Or one can say it is both. When it is perceived subjectively, it

is a state of complete emptiness where everything disappears. But, because it is absolute nothingness, it is also absolute creativity. As long as I do not write anything on this piece of paper, I can write anything on this piece of paper. As soon as I have written something, I can no longer write. Absolute creativity is like the blank sheet of paper; it is emptiness. The other way of looking at it is as X^2 , all possible combinations of all possible states: the *plenum*.

1.3 Scheme of The Dramatic Universe

In *The Dramatic Universe* I used these technical terms:

4. Unfathomable Source
3. Transfinite Reality
2. Limitless Being
1. All Existence

Expressed in that language, the worlds appear so much beyond our reach that it is even a waste of time to think about them, let alone consider them in a practical way. This view is false. All these worlds concern us, irrespective of whether we are large or small, last a short time or a long time or whether our states of consciousness reach very far or are limited.

It is easily possible to come to know a great deal more than we do about the spirit world: it is something we do experience and we do belong to. There are practical exercises the purpose of which is to prepare us to enter the third world. This is the world for which man was intended; it is here he finds his full realization. In this world he discovers how great he is, but in order to enter into it he has to become very small.

When a man enters the third world, he finds that his uniqueness has no limit. He is able to be there because he is what he is and this has nothing to do with anything that he has. If he can leave all of his existence behind he finds that he belongs to the world of the Transfinite Reality. Then he realizes that every other being is unique and therefore his sense of being different from others completely changes.

Entry into the fourth world is by the *fanai zāt*, the annihilation of essence. The distinction of whole and part no longer applies. Here is only the creative will, where everywhere one can be everything just because one is nothing. Not only existence has gone, but being also.

All that we can say belongs to Existence, the first world. That is why it is essential to have meditation and quietness. We need to teach ourselves how to look and how not to think.

1.4 Beyond Satori

One of the factors we have to contend with is that in looking at the step from one world to the next there is a kind of foreshortening effect. That is where the transfinite system of Cantor is so useful. When, for example, we

look at the step from the first bodily world to the second world of spirits it at first does not seem to be so very great. But this is the step from the finite and limited to the infinite and endless. The spirit world has no limits. The *rayu prana* meditation on the infinite nature of something very close to us, the air, is very valuable in making us aware of the second world; but it is a big thing to see the radical nature of the difference between the two worlds. The first world is really all existence, everything that is subject to laws of limitation. In the second, there are not those laws but there is still identity. This is given a narrower interpretation in Sufism which is concerned with life on the earth—simply that of disembodied existence. Interestingly enough, the scholars of Europe in the Middle Ages debated whether any two angels were alike and saw that every angel must be unique. The argument went like this: Since they are not limited by time and space, two angels which were the same would be doing the same thing and they would be doing it everywhere; but then there would be no reason for them both. So they concluded that angels are each unique members of a class. This is strangely like the description of Xo's and supports the notion of unique ways of arriving at something that is limitless. Though we have records of rational arguments that supported this view of angels, there must have been people with perceptions of the second world also.

In applying ordinary thinking to the worlds, we may picture to ourselves some kind of interface between one world and the next. But it is not really like that. There is no interface between a large number N and aleph zero X_0 . We can picture an exponential curve coming closer and closer to a line but there is no interface between the two; they coincide only in X_0 . There is a corresponding psychological fact: we are not able to pass from one world to another by means that are available in the first world.

When we looked at changes in consciousness we had to distinguish between the world of more and less consciousness and cosmic consciousness, aleph-consciousness or satori as it is called in Zen. Satori is a breakthrough, not a matter of more of the same. We break through a barrier; we do not pass through an interface. There is an interface between waking and sleeping because these are just two states of the same consciousness, like water and steam are two states of the substance designated H_2O . Water, steam, and ice are not three kinds of being but three states of the same being. There is no essential difference in passing from one to the other.

Insofar as we can talk of thoughts and feelings and sensations as phenomena, they are things we can know and observe, and belong to the first world. They are of the same kind and we can blend them together in certain exercises as a whole experience. But what is left over that really belongs to the second world? One kind of answer would be that it is something like our attention or involvement. It is not right to say that there is "I." There is no "I" that thinks, sleeps or awakens. When Gurdjieff was asked whether man had a "soul," he answered: "No. Ordinary man has no soul; but has something in its place." He said that it was like a cloud that travels through different parts of a man. Wherever

the cloud is, there is his interest or center of gravity. When it is in one part, that part matters to him and the others do not. This gives rise to the division between the different centers. When the cloud is organized, we call that the kesdjan body and it is the kesdjan body that goes into the second world and is our home between the first and the second deaths just as the physical body is our home in the earthly existence.

It is difficult to find a way of talking which does not imply that man already has a kesdjan body, but has a two world existence without his being able to make use of it because he is not aware of it. This is the situation when he cannot distinguish between dreams and genuine perceptions. The characteristic of the second world is that everything is what it is. We do not easily grasp that in the ordinary state of consciousness we do not see things as they are.

If we go further and look at the transition from the second to the third world we must recognize that although people can have a picture of cosmic consciousness, very few understand that the transfinite consciousness beyond—samadhi—is of quite a different kind. In cosmic consciousness there is something that remains very self-centered. One feels oneself to be the center of the world: "I see and know every thing," and "I am God" can certainly come into it. It is totally different in the next world: one is completely oneself and at the same time able to accept and be aware of everything as itself. Cosmic consciousness can give a feeling of universal love but samadhi can also tell one that there is someone hungry near you. This is the example Meister Eckhart gives: If a man in this state is aware of the need of his brother Christian for bread, he will leave his consciousness and see to the need of his brother. This seems ordinary, but it is not.

Shivapuri Baba said about it: "This (the third) world is hidden from you by the veil of consciousness. Remove that consciousness and you will see it." Others have said that consciousness is associated with form and where there is no form, there is no consciousness. The awkwardness is that in cosmic consciousness, which corresponds to the second world, individual forms disappear and one is liable to be caught in the illusion that this is the ultimate goal. But it does not take one into the real world, which I called the Transfinite Reality. The third world is transconscious. It is not beyond in the sense of size. It is not overwhelming in greatness—which is rather the characteristic of cosmic consciousness. On the contrary, it is more like a loss than a gain. It is the Reality itself.

The fourth world of the Unfathomable Source is different again. Only nothing is sufficiently free to be the source. People are shocked by the idea that if one comes to see God, one sees that God is nothing at all, because they think that this means to deny that there is God. God is only the projection or manifestation of the Unfathomable.

This ultimate world is not far away. That is, to think in terms of existence, the first quantitative world, how could it be "far away?" It is the source out of which comes every creative act. It concerns us more than anything else because

it is the point of our own creation.

Paradise belongs to the second world. The condition of limitless Compassion—that of the bodhisattva—belongs to the third world, where one can know every being in itself, not from the outside. The total and final liberation is in the fourth world.

Editor's Note

THE THREE TETRADS

In will is the how and why of reality. In being is the what: what is. How are these to be looked at together? Their combination is behind the working that we can see only in existential forms, the working that creates and maintains the character of the four worlds, this physical world of separation being wholly contained in the first.

In *The Dramatic Universe*, will is characterized by the triad. The essential nature of will is relatedness and dynamism which require three terms. Being subsists and is represented by the tetrad; subsistence and order requiring four independent terms. The four-fold structure gives the character of solidity and substance that three terms cannot. If then, we look for an understanding of the combination of will and being, the formal approach requires that we have not less than twelve terms, twelve being the product of four and three.

The advantage of a purely formal approach is that we are enabled to go beyond our experience, as has already been exemplified in the discussion of Georg Cantor's transfinite arithmetic. Thereafter, we can return to experience and look at it with different eyes. In this way, we gain a real understanding, for understanding must be concrete.

A study of a twelve-term structure is a formidable undertaking because of the variety of combinations it contains. We can think of three tetrads, four triads, six dyads, two hexads and so on. In Chapter 33 of *The Dramatic Universe*, where the formalism is explained, there is, however, an overriding concern; namely, the question of how God is manifest in the creation. This concern makes the tetrad or quaternity the main element and the question: "What is God?" the one from which all others derive. It is from the tetrad of deity that the whole scheme is worked out and, in fact, that tetrad is just the one which was discussed in the first chapter of this book.

If there is a tetrad of deity, there is also one that stands in the relationship of denial to it: this is the tetrad of materiality. There must be then a tetrad that is reconciling and this is the tetrad of vitality. The three tetrads form a cosmic triad: deity-vitality-materiality.

Tetrad of Deity - Being of cosmic affirmation
Tetrad of Vitality - Being of cosmic reconciliation
Tetrad of Materiality - Being of cosmic denial

To understand how the whole scheme is built up we need to look through the eyes of the dyad or two-term system. The fundamental dyad is that of unconditioned-conditioned, which is expressed in Sanskrit as *Arupa-rupa*, "formless-form." This dyad enters into each of the three tetrads. When the tetrads were first worked out it was by way of the dyad, since it is beyond the capacity of mind to entertain in one mental grasp the independence and mutual relevance of four terms. The formalism, runs as follows:

TETRAD OF DEITY

*Affirming***CHARACTERISTIC DYAD: Infinite—Finite**

Limitless Being	Finite-Infinite	ARUPA
All Existence	Finite-Finite	
The Unfathomable Infinite-Infinite		RUPA
Transfinite Reality Infinite-Finite		

TETRAD OF VITALITY

*Reconciling***CHARACTERISTIC DYAD: Essence—Existence**

Cosmic Life Principle	Essence-Essence	ARUPA
Unconditioned State of Being	Essence-Existence	
The Unfathomable	Existence-Essence	RUPA
Transfinite Reality	Existence-Existence	

TETRAD OF MATERIALITY

Denying

CHARACTERISTIC DYAD: Uncertain—Causal

Elemental States	Uncertain-Uncertain	ARUPA
'Transformable States' *	Uncertain-Causal	
Untransformable States' *	Causal-Uncertain	RUPA
Inert States	Causal-Causal	

What these terms can mean for us is discussed in the next three chapters in terms of experiences in which we can all share once we have learned to recognize their meaning.

*These are not the terms of The Dramatic Universe but reflect later thinking on nomenclature.

DEITY

2.1 Images of Deity

Let us think of a wheat field. What does it mean to us? The corn is waving; the sun is shining. We look at this. Is it just a beautiful picture? We also see that there is wheat, the substance from which we get our bread. This is something different for it goes beyond what is directly perceptible and depends in part on what we know or has been told to us. We can go more deeply and see the field of wheat as an aspect of the hidden working of the world, because it represents the cycle of food, the trogoautoecocratic process of reciprocal feeding. For many people, bread, the wheat field, and the cycle of sowing and reaping become a symbol of how man lives and how the world is maintained.

For people who base their lives on such food as bread, the symbol has the form of the yearly cycle of agriculture. Before the rise of agriculture, hunting nomads would have looked at a herd of deer and seen in it the symbol of the maintenance of life. They would have seen the beautiful movement of the deer, been aware of the excitement of the chase, and they would have looked at the flesh of the animal and said: "Here is the mystery of life. This is how we understand life." In the Ice Age it must have been like that because nothing besides meat would have sufficed to maintain life. Through the winter months in the northern climates there could be no question of anything else.

Both groups—agricultural people and hunting nomads—would have been looking at the same thing, the mystery of life, one seeing it in the growth and renewal of the wheat and its transformation into bread, the other in the herds with their own renewal and their transformation into roasted flesh. In both cases, behind knowledge of the visible process would have been the feeling of a simple truth: "we live by bread" or "we live by flesh." It is because of that we must have our magical ritual—the ritual of hunting or the ritual of fertility. Ancient literature has many references to the deep conflicts that existed between the hunter and herdsman such as Cain, and the cultivator and agriculturist such as Abel. In the *Zend Avesta*, we see the conflict between the Turanian nomads and the Aryan agriculturists. Then there is something further. The wheat and the flesh are our support but they come from somewhere and return to somewhere. How are we able to live through these things? the cycles on which we depend have something else behind them.

Following through the image of food and the support of life can dispose our

minds towards the question of what we mean by the word "God." Our first need is that we should have something to look at, something or some being that is a protection and an assurance of the continuity of life as we need an assurance that the wheat field will produce a crop and there will be a harvest of food. This need has to do with the properties of the existing world: separation and transience. We need something that will compensate for the realities of separation: the reality of transience, the reality of isolation. This we cannot find anywhere in anything, so we create an image of something—or images are created—for that. We cannot be ever-living so we create an image of an ever-living God. We cannot be every place, so we create an image of a God who is everywhere. Where everything is limited, we wish to have some hold on the unlimited, the undecaying and the permanent to deliver us from transience and limitation. This means that we need in this existing world to be able to represent to ourselves the world which is beyond existence, the world that I called limitless being. This world does not have the defects that assail us here. Everything around us and especially people all prove to have defects. People are never what we would hope them to be. Our love towards them comes up against checks. We need to have an image of a being towards whom love can be given without the fear that the idol will have feet of clay, who can be assured to be omniscient or at least so wise that his purposes will not fail, who knows what is needed and whom, therefore, we can serve and obey without the fears and reservations that we have when we serve and obey human masters.

The existing world is constrained, the prisoner of its own limitations. Yet there is something in man that cannot accept these limitations and therefore he looks for an image of something that has not got these limitations.

2.2 The Substance of Images

We may not know the world of being in the way we know the existing world, the world of bodies that we can investigate through our senses, but everyone—even if they have not thought about it in these terms—has some kind of feeling for another world or state of being where the limitations of this world do not apply. We are reinforced in this feeling by the assurance given from time to time by people who have seen and entered into this world. At first, it looks as if the image of another world is simply an extension of the kind of fantasies that we have about this world; but, partly through our own feelings about it and partly through the assurance given us by those people *who* have entered the second world and told us about it, some of us at least take the world of being to be a reality, even a greater reality than this existing world. We can even grasp that the second world is the reality and the world of existence is only a projection or a shadow of it.

The notion that an image is just a "picture in our minds" is a big misunderstanding. This makes it appear that the image is utterly dependent on the activity of our minds. This may be true for the transient pictures that come when we are in a state of daydreaming but even then the image can take hold of us. The images we need to understand are in some sense really there. We

have a wonderful and powerful illustration of this in the images created by the holographic technique, through which fully three dimensional forms can be made to exist in a definite place. The holographic image can even be photographed and looked at from different perspectives. We can go further and think about those people who are able to create such strong mental images that they can even be touched. This is very much practiced by Tibetan Buddhists who meditate many hours a day over many years.

It is through images that existence is entered by what is beyond existence. This is a very special thing. It is not a change of what is already there. The Israelites were forbidden to worship graven images such as the golden calf in which gold was taken and given shape, because God was a spirit. The true image is not made out of the material world, it is created without matter. The effect of this is that we have in the world something which does not really belong to it, which is able to appear in this world because of a creative power that literally brings it into existence, from beyond existence into existence.

As long as the perceptions of people depend on existence they must at least imagine something which can be seen and touched. The risen Christ said to Thomas: "Because you have seen and touched you have believed but blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe" but what is it that they believe in? They believe that there was something that could be seen and touched, that is, the risen Christ. It was that form their belief took. St. Paul said: "If Christ be not raised, then our hopes are in vain." This is very strange. Why should their hopes be in vain because of that? It is because we need to have an assurance that the spiritual can enter the material and therefore that we ourselves can be spiritualized.

Very much of religion is concerned with the notion of existence: proof that God exists; revelation that God exists; that such and such are the doings of God; how the world was created; how the Commandments were given; how man was redeemed and how God's purpose was revealed. Of course, the whole time there is the promise of something else that is beyond existence, but this takes a form that arouses in us an image. In the Quran, the images are entirely images of existence, as in describing the rewards of the righteous, how they will exist. Trouble comes if we allow ourselves to stop there and think of God only in terms of existence because then we have God as existing and at the same time we expect of God something which is not possible in the existing world.

It must be said in all truth that there is a spiritual presence in this world and that in religious worship even by people who do not look beyond existence something does happen so that when they feel the presence of God in their worship this is not necessarily imagination. The presence of God can be felt and it is there. But that presence is adapted to our limitations. We are taught, after all, that no man can see God and continue to live. We can only be aware of God with a veil as Moses saw God in the smoke and the fire. We may accept that there are appearances from another world in this world, but we must try to understand that the spiritual presence in existence has the limitations of the existing world. What is this limitation?

2.3 Existence

To exist is itself to be limited. To exist means to be separated from non-existence. If we cease to be separate we would cease to exist. If we ceased to be separated from each other then we would cease to be what we are. That is how it is in the first world, the world of bodies, *alam-i ajsam*.

Now when we mix flour and water and salt to make bread these things lose their separate existence; they go through some kind of transformation and something new appears. The baking of bread is often taken as a paradigm of a transformation. Of course, it all happens within the existing world but the point is that the separate constituents cease to exist as such. In order to make bread, flour must cease to be flour and water must cease to be water. Their substance does not disappear, but their separate identity disappears.

We cannot, without great difficulty and much patience, get out of the way of experiencing in terms of separation. We tend to experience, as it is said, in space and time, so that today is separated from yesterday and tomorrow is separated from today, and every place is separated from every other place. Anything that goes against that is impossible and we say that it is impossible for yesterday's sun to rise again.

Existence means all possibilities. Everything that is possible exists. This is quite different from saying that everything that exists is actual. Tomorrow has its own existence but it is not actual. What is actual is this moment. Being actual is a much more limited thing than being possible. It is possible for me to take my left hand off my knee and put it on to the arm of my chair. It is also possible for me to leave it where it is. But I cannot do both. If I am to keep my hand on my knee it will not get onto my chair. Yet it is not right to say that my hand on the arm of my chair does not exist because what is potential is not nothing. The world of potentialities is very great compared with the world that actually happens. This is one reason why things actually happening are so disappointing, because what can happen is so limited.

We live in a very limited and restricted world but because so many things happen, and so many things that are unexpected, we have the illusion that it is a world that is very free. It is not really so, neither for man nor for God. In so far as God exists. He is separate from us as we are from each other. This does not mean that it is false to say that God exists—only that if we say that, we are saying one of the least important things we can say about God.

There is a very interesting and much debated phrase in the Epistles of St. Paul where he speaks about the Incarnation, saying that God did not hesitate to empty Himself in order to become man. The word used was *kenosis*, emptying. Here there may be a confusion. The word emptiness can be used to characterize the absolute nothingness of the unfathomable. Here it means the opposite, the giving up of limitless being in order to make it possible to exist. When we strive to enter the higher world, we have to leave everything limited and finite behind; but to come into this existing world one has to leave everything unlimited and infinite behind. The latter is the meaning of the *kenosis* of God Who had to leave His own reality behind to come into a state of limitedness.

2.4 Limitless Being

Existence is very poor and being is very rich. We can say that being has another dimension, a depth that existence does not have. When we speak of God as existing we are only speaking of an image because God has too many dimensions to get into existence. When He comes into the existing world, He is subject to the limitations of the existing world. One of the very important Christian teachings is that in the incarnation of God as Jesus, He came under the laws of this world. His body went through transformations like any other body, He grew up and if He had not been killed, would have grown old and died. He was also limited in what He could know. If we take the Gospels seriously, as they are written, we can see that He did not foresee how things were going to happen. He said: "You will not have gone through all the cities of Israel until the Kingdom of God—or the Son on Man—be come." It did not happen like that. The expectations and possibilities were not fulfilled because in the existing world there are certain things that one cannot know. We cannot know about the future because there are factors which are unknowable, that are not within the existing world. In so far as we are in the existing world, we cannot know.

When we speak about being all these limitations disappear. There is the saying: "With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible." This saying refers to the difference between existence and being. Limitless being is the second way in which God is. We cannot say that this is the second way in which God manifests because it is not manifested. But it is possible to say that this is the second way in which God works. It belongs to the second world, the spirit world, *alam-i arwah*. There, there are no limits. When it is said: "God is a spirit and must be worshiped in Spirit and truth" it refers to this.

This is out of reach of our senses; it cannot be seen and touched. Yet it is still in a world of form, though of unlimited form. In the *Bhagavad Gita* it describes how Arjuna asks Krishna to show Himself in his unlimited form and when this happens, Arjuna is terrified because it is unbearable. Why is it unbearable? It is because in the presence of this all existence is destroyed. The power of God, His omnipotence and limitlessness, are in the second world, not in the first, existing world.

We see in this existing world very vast gradations. We can see the state of existence of inanimate objects—stones and rocks and even less-organized states of existence. We can see existence organized in living forms, up to man. We can go further and see suprahuman beings and even divine beings, incarnations, who have the very qualities of unlimitedness and permanence that we look for and give us the visible and tangible proof that there is something other than this impermanent world.

If we set ourselves to think about the second world, we can also, without difficulty, see that there must be gradations here also. There are nature spirits such as the spirit of a tree that is invisible in the tree. The spirits do not exist as our bodies exist. They can, under certain circumstances, manifest in the existing

world, but their real nature is to be in the world of being. The field of corn is more than what we can see; it is the support of life. The invisible in the corn field is much more important to us than the visible. The visible fascinates our senses, but the invisible satisfies something deeper. Some people have an awareness of spirit beings, others do not. Nevertheless, it is possible to picture them. It is also possible to think of various degenerated forms, such as states of human existence after death where nothing remains but a dream state attached to this world. It is possible to think of various angelic or demiurgic powers that exercise a very high function in the spirit world. At the extreme, we can think of the hierarchy ending in one supreme being. All the varieties of spirit being are aspects of deity and there are an infinite number we could never conceive of. But we can say that just as for the corn field, there is the ultimate possibility of food by which all life is manifested so there is the spiritual reality behind all the manifestations of this world, the reality by which this world is maintained.

So we arrive at such ideas as that of incarnations. The spiritual being can enter into visible form. It is easily possible to see that this supreme being can be conceived in different ways because one arrives at it through one's experience coming from one's own perspective. Anyone who begins to have a glimpse of the second world will mistake his vision for the ultimate.

Spirit beings have their own forms, though they are free of the limitations of existence. They have their own possibilities and impossibilities. They have attributes.

Historically, the notion of God as a being has always been associated with the notion of God as authority, as the ruler and master of the world, the great being. He is pictured as not having limitations and yet as a being. Because we also feel ourselves somehow to be beings there is a likeness between us and the supreme being. The difference is that we are limited, transient and separate whereas He is not.

2.5 Transfinite Reality

At first it might appear that there is no sense in looking beyond limitless being. But we cannot stop with thinking of everything that is possible and leaving out of account impossibilities. The impossible is not totally excluded: it is only excluded from being. In the world of being there are all the possibilities and in the existing world only very few of them can be actualized. But there must also be a place for everything that is impossible. This is what I have called the Transfinite Reality. It is so much more dense, full, than the world of being because it contains everything that is impossible as well as everything that is possible. This obviously means going beyond form, because everything that has form is possible. But why should we even think about this?

The most important reason is that the Work is impossible. Something has to happen in this Work that is against the Law. The Law is restriction to what is possible. One of the laws of this world is that there is a connectedness of cause and effect. In everything that we do we create causes and: "As a man soweth, so shall he also reap." If we were wholly subject to cause and effect—

to karma—there would be no hope for us. If we had to reap the consequences of our actions there would be no escape. The Work is such that we do not sow the seeds of it.

One of the simplest psychological illustrations of this is in remembering oneself. One can see that it is impossible to remember oneself and understand why this is so: there are too many distracting things, not only externally but internally, as in the working of our nervous system. The nervous system does not allow the state of self-remembering because there is something—and it has to be there—which can irritate and disturb us and arouse different associations. One of the purposes of setting people seriously to try to remember themselves is to enable them to see that it is impossible for man. Yet it is necessary. We are here in front of something that is both necessary and impossible. This is not a rhetorical statement but how the Work is. If we do not understand it, we are either too hopeful in thinking that we can do it or too hopeless in thinking that it cannot be done. People do fall between false hope and mistaken hopelessness. The reality of the situation is that because there is a world beyond, a God beyond being, the impossible can come about.

In the study of the Seven Lines of Work,* it is said that the seventh line—which can be called grace—is outside of causality. It is neither something we do nor is it something that we allow to be done to us. It is the mystery of the Work. Something is given us that has nothing to do with cause and effect, which is altogether unearned and unearnable. This is an illustration of what is meant by the Transfinite Reality.

Another way of looking at it is to make the distinction between justice and compassion. We said that in the second world is the supreme being whose character is to be ruler of the world. In this world, the Law? we spoke of cannot be set aside. The supreme authority must exercise authority. Whether it is thought of in a personal way, in the form of commandments or an impersonal way as in the Buddhist dharma, it means that something is imposed from the world of being upon the world of existence.

There are powers concerned with the regulation of the world that are not concerned with our welfare. In Gurdjieff's *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, this is expressed in the idea that the existing world was created to provide for an equilibrium with the unlimited world so that the unlimited world could exist eternally by renewal through the trogoautoegocrat. This involved a certain cosmic order that has to be maintained, which entails consequences if there is any departure from it. So mankind was subject to constraints which have nothing to do with its own actions or nature, but were required for the cosmic order. Gurdjieff goes so far as to picture the Archangel Looisos saying with a certain amount of smug satisfaction that nothing unexpected can now happen in that corner of the universe.

The Law is just. There has to be a regulating power in the world, between the working of causality and the pattern of possibilities or dharma, which have

* *Th-Sevenfold Work*, J.G. Bennett, Coombe Springs Press, 1979. Available from Bennett Books.

to do with the purpose for which it was created. But, owing to the hazardous nature of existence, where possibilities can so easily be missed, the working of justice is yet lacking in compassion.

The laws of this world cannot be violated, because if they were there would be no such world. The world of being has its own laws which must be kept. So something impossible has to be done in the world so that there can be an act of compassion.

Our Endlessness, who is pictured as all-wise and all-loving is not able just **by** decree to reverse the workings of the Merciless Heropass or Time. He can intervene only by the exercise of intelligence and by the arising in the existing world of beings capable of freedom of which we men are one species. The demiurgic intelligence can only be concerned with the maintenance of order, with adherence to the pattern of the world. Gurdjieff shows how this results for man in being put in the position that he is unable to fulfill his higher destiny because this comes into conflict with the demands for order in the world.

Gurdjieff does not make this very clear because he has all his superior beings—angels and messengers—"coming from above" and it is not easy to see that the messengers sent from Above are incarnated to fill the role of the divine compassion which cannot be filled by the demiurgic powers.

The central ideal was present in the old Gnostic teaching which was pushed aside and as far as possible destroyed by the Christian churches. There are two Gods: one who created the world as an orderly cosmos and had no concern with the fate of individuals, and the higher god whose attributes were love, compassion and mercy. The higher god could not overrule the decrees of the lower god but he could intervene in this world through gentleness, as for example in the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

So we come to a third way of looking at God—as beyond being, not merely unlimited but transfinite. This is something that can no longer be spoken, because as soon as we say anything we are bound to talk as if we were talking about a being or some state of being. Still, there is something in us that is capable of recognizing that it has to be so. Yes, there is God who exists and works in this world. There is God who is a being, a spirit who is the apex of the spiritual hierarchy, the source of all the power and beauty that we think of as spiritual realities. But there is also God who is without form and who is beyond being and therefore cannot be spoken of at all. Just because He is totally without limitation. He can be as close to us—even closer—than God of existence or being. As long as we need to have mental images and cannot accept it in any other way, we shut ourselves away from an awareness of the transfinite God.

2.6 Sacred Images

However, we must not think that because images are images that they are not a necessary part of the whole cosmic harmony. There are sacred images which originate from the Transfinite World. Gurdjieff put it in this way. From time to time there is an incarnation in this world from above—that is the transfinite world, beyond form, directly from the source. Individuals are

commanded to take human form, say as Ashiata Shiemash. When such an incarnation takes place there come about events which are incomprehensible for ordinary human understanding. Something is prepared which allows an action from a higher world to begin in this world. This cannot be understood and need not be understood. It is not revealed except to a very limited number of specially prepared beings. Zoroaster had his immediate helpers, Buddha and Jesus had their disciples and Mohammed had his companions. Something can happen that cannot be perceived by ordinary people because it is really happening in the spirit world. A work is done there that is to establish in this world a new action. When this is completed, the cosmic individual returns to the Source. Ordinary people who can perceive things only of this world are provided with a connection by what has been created. What has been created is a sacred image and it is sacred because it has been created around a very deep reality: the presence on this earth of a divine being. After the separation of the cosmic individual from this world through death, the sacred rascioarno, the image is created that is then a source of consolation and hope for people for a very long time. The image has such reality injected into it that it is actually more real than existing states, it has more substance than anything that exists in the bodily sense.

It is always presented as a very severe and exacting task to be associated with the creation of a sacred image and all be one of the immediate disciples of Jesus died by violence. The companions of Mohammed lived extremely difficult lives and nobody can understand who or what they were.

In Islam a very great emphasis is placed on the compassion of God. The Quran begins with *Bismillab-ir Rahman-ir Rahim*—in the Name of Allah the Compassionate the Merciful. Yet there is the strange thing that causality and even predestination is also strongly asserted and in places the Quran even appears to say that God has already chosen those who will be saved and those who will be condemned. This presents such a stark contradiction to the idea of Allah the Compassionate. In Islam, there are the two quite different images: one of the just but wrathful God who requires that men should fulfill the commandments and who will destroy whoever and whatever disobeys; and the other of the compassionate God who will set aside even His own laws in order to draw men to Him. It has been hard for the Muslim theologians to find a way of dealing with the contradiction. So there have arisen two schools of thought, one emphasizing the justice of God, the wisdom of His decrees and the reward of virtue and the punishment of wickedness; the other emphasizing the love of God. Sufism has largely arisen from the latter school and that is why there is conflict between Sufism and certain sectors of Islam.

There is in reality no conflict. The just God belongs to the second world and the God of compassion to the third. The practical difficulty is that we do not have sufficient openness to have the perceptions that are required to see into these higher worlds. We need the help given by a sacred image. But we must remember that to speak of Jesus Christ as a sacred image is not saying less than is taught in the Christian religion. The substance is the same. The point of

understanding that when we pray we pray through or to a sacred image is that we are then protected from making certain kinds of mistakes, particularly of thinking that we can know God in the way we know anything else.

The power of sacred images is not a hidden secret thing. It is not even confined to the concrete visions that spiritual people can have of the sacred ones, the visions that saints have of Christ or Buddha. There are objective independent appearances that are seen by many people and which produce results in the world. Such were the apparitions of the Virgin Mary that had a very powerful effect. Perhaps the Christian faith would have been very hard to hold together through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries without them. It is because large numbers of people have had the direct experience and transmitted it to others that the Christian religion has acquired a much more personal character than it had at the beginning of the nineteenth century when it was all very remote. There is no doubt that these appearances were real images. They were not just the fantasy of certain children, they were more powerful and more real than actual bodies. They were direct manifestations from the higher world.

When we try in a right way to see how it is to enter the third world, it is possible to experience the presence of Mary. She always appears surrounded by a blue light. For some reason this color has always been associated with Mary. She can get through without any difficulty. Once one can leave oneself one can get into that world and back again without being caught and without the sense of having to give up something.

We can and should put our attention beyond to what we cannot see, where our senses stop. Perhaps we can realize that when we are detached from this state of existence we can become aware of the second world. How far we can go into it, how far we can approach the purity of the divine being—that is another matter.

There is a totally different way by which one becomes aware of the third world. This is through a sense of total nothingness in oneself, when one realizes that this total nothingness is the Source out of which everything is coming. This nothingness is beyond being in the sense of being infinitely greater than being. It is by no means the final end to become a perfected being.

There is yet to get one's will liberated from any kind of being and to be able to create beings around any form that is required.

2.7 The Unfathomable

We have not so far spoken of the fourth world, the Absolute. How can we think it is necessary to do so, that there is any reason for going beyond the picture of will that has no limitations and no conditions whatever, that can take all forms and create its own forms and even its own body? It is, that a question still remains. Where did this will come from? If we can ask a question, we are not at the end. Where we reach the end of all questions it is what I call the Unfathomable. When the Sufis speak of absolute nothingness or when Buddha speaks of nirvana they say we can ask no more questions.

Those who have brought the fourth world into their vision have always

said that questions cease when there is emptiness. Yet this emptiness is more than all there is.

The fourth aspect of deity is also immediately close to us. It is when we have the experience of nothingness that all the rest can happen. Of course, our experience of emptiness is imperfect. It is not nirvana or *itlaq*, absolute liberation. But it comes from that world; it is the part in that world that we are able to have. In the Sufi path, they talk of *fana* and *baqa*, of annihilation and renewal or of death and resurrection. *Fana* is not really death, it means "not to be." The Sufis speak of it coming stage by stage, and that is the real truth of it.

Whenever something really happens to us and really changes us, something also must cease to exist in us. And it must cease to exist in us without any why, from, or to; it must be just *that*. When it is right there is just an awareness of complete emptiness and complete peace. As long as there is disturbance and distress at the feeling of emptiness, we are not ready for it. When it does come there is a great thankfulness of being able to let go and stop asking questions and stop wishing for anything. That is a taste—a very tiny taste but nevertheless a real one—of the fourth world, the ultimate source of creation.

VITALITY

3.1 The Cosmic Life Principle

It might at first appear quite a straight forward thing to find out what life is. There it is all around us. We ourselves are living. Countless studies have been made of the working of living organisms. But none of this gives us an answer to the question of the why of life and there is little that it gives to answering the what: what is the very substance of life? We must hold in front of us a question like that of the Shivapuri Baba:* "There is this life. What is the meaning of this life?"

From our observation of the living forms on this planet, we can see that they are able to do something for themselves which nonliving forms cannot do: they can maintain themselves; they can feed and reproduce. This we do not find in material objects. This has raised the question of how it is that such self-maintaining forms came to exist in the first place. Believers in mechanical evolution have convinced themselves that life arose on this earth from nonliving matter by nothing more than physico-chemical agencies. The story is that complex molecules arose out of enormous periods of time and enormous numbers of more elementary states; some of them were highly improbable but proved to be capable of self-renewal and self-reproduction. This belief is crucial if one is to reject any idea that there are conscious agencies at work—higher powers, or demiurgic intelligences to use the language of *The Dramatic Universe*. The belief in mechanism has a big stake in holding to the view that nothing more than random combinations led by accident to the highly improbable organizations we call living beings.

On the surface, it appears to be a crucial factor whether or not self-reproducing forms can be produced in the laboratory, but it is not really so. If we were to succeed in the synthesis, this would be because life has already provided us with the model of how it could be put together. On the other hand, if we were to set ourselves to synthesize self-reproducing forms based on silicon rather than on carbon—the two elements have similar chemical properties—this would more truly approximate to the situation on the earth before life came when there was not, according to the mechanists, the idea of

* cf. G. Bennett: *Living Pilgrimage: The life and teaching of the Shivapuri Baba*. Tumstone Press, 1982. Available exclusively in the U.S.A. from Bennett Books.

life present in any form. So the success of current undertakings to synthesize living matter would be inconclusive as a proof of the mechanistic view; but there is also no way of disproving that life arose through accidental combinations either.

The considerations should be enough to enable us to see that we cannot understand life by trying to work out how life came about. We have to look in a different direction. If we look from so-to-say the "top" of life, that is from man, we have in our view something very peculiar: our mind, that seems to have something more than life in it. We can picture to ourselves the mind continuing when entirely separated from the body. Whether this is possible or not is another matter. People have had experiences—I have had them—that are hard to explain in any other way, but it is never conclusive. A really conclusive thing would be for someone to die and go off and have experiences and then come back and tell us about it. This has not yet been achieved in any convincing way, so that we can be sure that the body played no part at all. In the end, then, we cannot say with confidence that there is any reason for believing that life came from mind or that mind came from life.

Besides questions to do with the relation of living beings to physico-chemical laws or to mind, there is the question of the universality of life. Is life confined to this planet? If so, then people may well be justified in treating it as a strange accident to be disregarded in our view of the whole universe. But if life is present throughout, or at least on a sufficiently large number of planets, we have to take notice of it in our view of the world. There may not be life such as we know it, but something equivalent. The characteristic of life is autonomy, that is being a law unto itself.

In *The Dramatic Universe*, Vol. I, I divided the world into three realms as follows:

Hypernomic—that which is above the law, corresponding to the tetrad of deity.

Autonomic—that which is a law unto itself, which is able to do something for itself.

Hyponomic—that which is subject to law, corresponding to the tetrad of materiality.

If the autonomic mode is universal, then there is a chance of understanding it in a cosmic context instead of having to try to explain how it could arrive at one remote and insignificant part of the universe. I think we have to work on that assumption. Life does represent something that is neither material nor mental and cannot be a local phenomenon. I am going to take it that there is life throughout the universe. There is some cosmic property that works through everything that is living everywhere. This is where we have to start, rather from trying to find out where life came from in the past, or trying to see it in terms of the human kind of existence that is centered on the mind, or trying to find out how living beings are put together. We will try to understand what I call the Cosmic Life Principle. This principle would stand in relation to all kinds of

living phenomena as the Unfathomable Source stands in relation to all the worlds.

3.2 Life as Reconciliation

Life is neither hypenomic nor hyponomic. It is neither the creative power that brings the world into existence nor the passive matter that is organized into the various structures of the visible world. Suppose there is a Creative Power that brings this world into existence. Is all this world life? No, because there is very much that is nonliving; indeed, most of the observable world is nonliving. Within the existing world we can see such great entities as the sun and moon, neither of which can be said to be living. The moon is often taken to be a symbol of the dead world that is less than living. But the sun is different. We can feel in the sun a creative power and we know that it has, particularly in Egypt, been worshiped as a manifestation of the Creator. The sun is not a manifestation of life; it is something that is nonliving in the sense of being more than alive.

As we look around us we can see states of existence that are less than alive which are inert, passive states; and states of existence that are more than alive such as the sun, the stars and the galaxies. It almost seems that life has emerged from the coming together of what is more than life—the hypenomic—with what is less than life—the hyponomic. It seems right to say that life on this earth has come about from the combination of the creative power of the sun and the inert material of the earth's surface. The radiation from the sun is obviously necessary for the maintenance of life and probably it was necessary for the evolutionary process through the stimulation of mutations. It is also probable that the gravitation action of both the sun and the moon are important in establishing the conditions conducive to life and its regulation.

Yet life is something independent of the hypenomic affirmation and the hyponomic denial: it has to be if it is to play its cosmic role of reconciling the two. The third or reconciling force in a triad is not a product of the other two forces but an independent element. We may say that it emerged from the other two forces, but what emerges has its own nature and its own influence and role. There is something in life of the active or creative and something of the material or passive.

There was a deep understanding of the triad in certain schools in Egypt and this understanding persisted into the second and third century of our era. It played a very big part in the formulation of Christian doctrine. From the schools of Antioch came an understanding of the unity of God; from those of Alexandria came an understanding of threefoldness. All of this was brought together after a century and a half of search and debate—and things not so praiseworthy, such as political pressures of all kinds—in the form of the Christian Creed. There the idea of the cosmic role of life is made perfectly explicit.

The third force is given the name of the Holy Ghost and this is described

"The Lord the giver of life." The Holy Ghost "proceeds from the Father and the Son" it is not made or produced by them. The Creed has much in it

that amounts to a legomonism—that is an intentional artifice transmitting important knowledge to future generations able to grasp its significance.

The Cosmic Life Principle is not a manifestation, but all that lives is its manifestation. We should try to be sensitive to this reality and bring it into our understanding about food, the living beings around us and the life in us. All of us and all of life are manifestations of the third force. People are intended to be conscious manifestations of the third force.

The reconciliation of life extends all the way from the Unfathomable Source to the ground state of hyle. If we look at the universe as a phenomenon in time, going from some beginning in the past to some consummation in the future, then it could be described as coming to life. When its evolution is completed, the universe will be entirely alive. At present, the living is vastly smaller than the nonliving, but something is coming about to increase the range of life. It may be that there is more contact between life and the body of the earth than we can realize. Some people—like Vernadsky—have felt very strongly that the planet is already a living being; it may be that it is a form of life that we cannot at present begin to understand.

But if we look at it entirely in an historical way, starting with the nonliving and ending up with a totally living situation, we miss something of the depth of it. Also it would be for us rather devastating to realize that we are extremely remote from the earth's being as it is destined to be. If the earth is to be transformed into a living being it will take hundreds or thousands of millions of years to do so. What is the point of thinking about that on the scale of human life? But if we look at it out of the space-time framework we can look at it in depth and then it is different, because depth is not troubled by size.

3.3 Life As A Tetrad

The immediate contact we have with life we call nature and sometimes Mother Nature—a good name because something has to be like a mother and bring forth the creatures. Nature is the existence of life, whereas the Cosmic Life Principle is its essence. The essence is everything that is possible but not actual. The existence is everything that is actual with its possibilities used up in becoming actual. Our existence is what we are and our essence is what we might be. In *The Dramatic Universe* I used the two terms essence and existence to produce four modes of vitality, in the following way:

	Cosmic Life Principle	Essence-Essence
ARUPA	Unconditioned State of Being	Essence-Existence
	Conditioned States of Being Existence-Essence	
APUPA	Nature	Existence-Existence

There are two intermediary states between the pure essence of life and its existence. These we will try to understand. We can begin with ourselves, because we people are clearly something between the natural world of living things and the unmanifest world of the life principle. There is something more in us than living flesh. There is our mind—whatever it may be it is not living flesh and it is not inert matter. We said before that it is possible to picture a disembodied state; but of course we would tend to picture it somewhat after the fashion of living flesh, for it is very difficult not to picture things in space and time.

We people are permeated with the great life force and this can be understood in four ways.

Firstly, there is our natural body, a living organism, having the autonomous property of being able to maintain itself in its environment, at a higher level of energy than its surroundings. We have a certain freedom by use of food and reproduction.

Secondly, we are incarnated beings. We realize ourselves as minds living in bodies and we recognize that "we" are conditioned by this state of existence and become subject to space and time, quantity and measureableness.

This is not all. We have a feeling towards an unconditioned state. This is **the** goal of the deeper exercises we do in the Work. We are aware that there is somewhere in us a gap and something or other we are not able to reach beyond the gap. That gap divides the knowable from the unknowable; but to be unknowable does not mean to be beyond all possible experience. It is one of the difficulties of our work that something can happen to us which really belongs to the unconditioned state and then, because we feel it to be important and want to know what it is, it vanishes just when we try to bring it into focus and we are left asking ourselves whether anything really happened at all.

Life itself is not confined to the knowable world. Life itself has an unmeasurable side as well as a conditioned one. This is the true mystery of life. When we allow life to touch us we sense that there is a mystery which we cannot reach out and take hold of. This is particularly so at moments of birth and death and any kind of strong perceptive experience; but it is really there all the time. We should not say to ourselves that there is a mystery in life because it is very complex and difficult to know and that when we find out about it the mystery will disappear. It is not at all like that. The mystery is there because life goes above the middle line into the *arupa*. In terms of quantity, life may be very small in the world, but it has a depth that probably goes further than the material world can go.

It would not be reasonable to suppose that it is only man who has sufficient depth to reach in himself the unconditioned state. If life is really a cosmic principle, then the unconditioned depth is everywhere. In us people, the depth is individualized. We need to see how much depth there is in our experience. We look back over the last hour. Perhaps we have been trying to be attentive, not mechanical. But what is the reality? How much depth has there been? We look and we see brief moments and realize that we can have depth for only

short periods of time. People then ask themselves: "Is this any good? Is it not necessary to have this depth all the time in order to be a complete being?" It is not necessary—and it is not possible because we are incarnated beings. To be continuously aware of the depth we would have to be free from time. If a change came such that we left behind our physical body and our spirit body and found ourselves only in our third body—then there would be nothing to prevent a state of unbroken awareness of the depth. In the incarnated state it is not possible, nor is it desirable. It would be impossible for us to withstand it. Not being able to be in a state of unbroken awareness is not a sign of imperfection, it is necessary so that the physical body will not be destroyed. This does not mean that we should not try to lift ourselves out of the conditioned state: we need regularly to lift ourselves out of it as soon as we learn how to do that. But there should not be any wish to maintain it—we should know better than that.

There was once a woman who told Gurdjieff that in the course of doing an exercise she had an unbroken state of consciousness for fifteen minutes. He retorted: "You not. It is not possible." She tried to argue with him, but he insisted: "It is not possible. Even not possible for God's Mother. You wish to be more than God's Mother?" Of course it is possible to have trance states, but then one is separated from the natural world. What is not possible is to maintain an awareness of one's existence and also one's unconditioned state at the same time. Yet it is upon these moments that our whole understanding of the world will be built.

Our own possibilities of transformation turn on the great reservoir of potentialities that we have in the unconditioned part of our nature. To fulfill our destiny as human beings we have to become more and more aware of the unconditioned side. It is only then that we acquire the freedom to do anything creative in this world. This is not an easy thing, because we expect the awareness of the third unconditioned world to be something overwhelming or very extraordinary. The truth is that we come into it again and again and do not recognize it because of our expectations. The fourth level of vitality is perfectly free and unlimited. It brings about the whole scale of potentialities in which even existential life has potentials that nonliving matter does not have.

3.4 Supernatural and Natural Life

The four aspects of vitality are clearly not only relevant to man. The Cosmic Life Principle is sometimes known as the Life Force that proceeds directly from the Will of God. It is unique but it can be manifested in and through individuals and in any form of life. It is not to be confused with the depth of affirmation which is the source of all being; it is not the Creative Power that brings worlds into existence but really how the worlds are reconciled. In *The Dramatic Universe* *

I put it that life is the four-term counterpart of individuality in the triad. Individuality and life should be intimately connected and life gives individuality a more concrete significance than can be given by the triad alone.

* *The Dramatic Universe*, Vol II, pp 251-52. (Santa Fe, Bienen: Books: 1998.)

We may picture to ourselves that perfect or near perfect individuals can arise on planets. Perfect individuality is a combination of function with being and will that is perfectly harmonized in itself and corresponds exactly to the needs of its environment. Such a combination is impossible under the determining conditions as they apply to any existing entity and so no manifested or incarnated individual can be perfect. Yet there must be a source of individuality that is untainted by imperfections or the whole of existence would be irretrievably out of balance.* So this source lies in the unconditioned world that is beyond the distinction of possible and impossible—the Transfinite Reality. Individuality is the form in which the will enters and operates in the existing world. It must be able to participate in existence without being subject to its vicissitudes. This is the meaning of unconditioned state of being: the projection of the Cosmic Life Principle into the world of limitless being. Individuality requires an appropriate vehicle which is formed from hyle in the virtual state. Gurdjieff calls this the higher being body, but it is very unlike a body since it has no shape or past or future, but is the imperishable: there is no longer separation between time, space and eternity. It is not something individual in the merely personal sense. It is able to receive the energies of love, creativity and consciousness so that the essential life can be associated with a state of being—some mystical philosophers, such as Plotinus, have spoken about the universal soul that is the source of all life.

Within the unconditioned state of life there are various modes of existence which can be classified into static and dynamic. The former corresponds to the angelic or demiurgic essence and the latter to three-natured beings like men whose selfhood has attained a consciousness of unity with the Cosmic Life Principle. The complete perfecting of man is a three-fold process in which function and will are no less involved than being. The foundation of individuality is the will, but its manifestations are in the functions. It is the unconditioned state of being that brings about the harmony of will and function by which the soul is liberated from the limitations of space and time.

The conditioned state of life, the third member of the tetrad, is the state of unrealized potentiality and is common to all autonomic entities. In man, this corresponds to his various selves. Selfhood is largely a matter of potentials, but the domination of existence over essence is relative and so the selfhood of man has many different levels giving the experience of different degrees of "withinness" and the possibility of self knowledge. The conditioned state can be called life in time but a balance between the inner and the outer life is possible. All planetary existence is in the conditioned state of being.

Man stands in the very middle, between the conditioned and the unconditioned states. This is the place of balance of the whole creation and has a decisive bearing upon our human experience because it means that the true values for man can be found neither in the affirming nor the denying tetrad but at the very core of the reconciling tetrad that is itself the bearer of all life.

* cf. "The Holy Planet Puigatory," in J.G. Bennett: *Talks on Beelzebub's Tales*, York, Maine: Weiser.

The bottom term of the tetrad of vitality we have called nature. This is all life in its existential aspect. Life takes on innumerable forms and with these different gradations of individuality can be associated. There is an endless variety of function. The scale of duration can vary from seconds to hundreds of millions of years and in size from that of submicroscopic viruses to the manifestations of great planets as large as stars. Nevertheless, with all this complexity nature remains a well-defined state of being. It has no individual essence, but we can regard it as the vitality of the universe. Thanks to this vitality all the transformations of energy required for the fulfillment of cosmic progress is assured. Mother Nature or Great Nature is the living matrix from which we and all other sentient beings derive our existence.

The natural is to be contrasted with the supernatural. Nature is confined within the limitations of existence but the Supernatural Life Principle rises above existence to seek and manifest the essence. The two stand to one another as the female and male powers of all life. By their mutual action, existence and essence enter into a fruitful union that gives rise to the two intermediate states. The planets are the scene of this mutual action and from this comes their decisive importance for the realization of the cosmic harmony—the trogoautoegocrat.

Questions

Q. You mentioned the spirit body of man. Do all living entities have spirit bodies?

We have talked before about the spirit world, *alam-i arwah*. This is not restricted by material forms but it is still conditioned and in the tetrad of vitality what corresponds to it are the conditioned states of being. Living beings do have a spirit nature, but in men there is the possibility of building something that will enable him to go further, beyond. A man who is not transformed has thoughts, awareness, that are not bodily but very much attached to bodily existence. That is why we talk about something like "mind." It is still conditioned and is not independently organized to count as a "spirit body" as I used that term. Disembodied minds are really like ghosts and that is where the term *ruh* or spirit comes in.

There are not only mental ghosts and living spirits, there are also nonliving spirits which have not come from life and do not have the form of life. For example, there is the spirit of a river, which we can become aware of. It is not the visible river but when one lives with a river one comes to know that the river is more than a visible thing. Similarly with the spirit of a mountain. I call all the spirits associated with the material world elementals and we will come to them later.

There are also spirits above life, such as the demiurgic powers that are hypnomic and creative and not at all dependent on material forms. These enter the spirit world from above as the elementals enter from below.

Q. What is man's role in life?

We have to understand the importance of entering into the formless world. It

is a matter of rejoicing in our work when this begins to happen. It is the aim of meditation—samadhi. There is a great power seeking to manifest itself as life. It has brought about life on this planet so that something could be done to reconcile the forces of creation and inertia. As I said, maybe in time all of the universe becomes alive and the work will be completed. How many thousands of millions of years, how many coming and going of stars and galaxies will be required, no one knows. Life has come slowly on the earth. Now we are in the dangerous situation where creativity has been able to enter and man has taken on a role of domination for which he was not destined. His role should be that of the just ruler of nature, as a manifestation of the reconciling. What mankind needs is the penetration of an awareness of the formless world.

Q. I found your references to individuality difficult to follow. Could you simplify this a little?

It is only through meditation that these things can be assimilated, not by thinking about them. I put them in front of you so that you can then go and look at what they mean by opening yourself. This is what we do in making the *rukus* in the morning. The first *ruku* is towards our own unconditioned state. This is our personal individuality, our own "I". It is easy to see that man has two parts: body and mind. The mind has to be transformed in order to really be something—a soul. But there is also something not so easy to see which is the divine in him, the spirit of man. You may remember that Gurdjieff spoke of two higher centers, the higher emotional and the higher intellectual. I have always felt these to be very awkward terms, but the first really has to do with the first *ruku* the personal side. The second is to do with the second *ruku* -which is directed towards the Cosmic Life Principle. We should not be afraid of it because it is so big, the power that permeates the universe with life, it is also in us. It is said that we are all children of a common Father. Looked at in terms of will, this is the Cosmic Individuality; in terms of being, it is the Life Principle. It is in this that we are all one. Here is the truth of the commandment "Love thy neighbor as thyself." What a state of illusion people live in! They think they can get advantage for themselves at the expense of their neighbor without returning as much or more than they take. This only perpetrates a state of separation which is a miserable state.

MATERIALITY

There are two ways in which we can look at matter. In the first, matter is the opposite of the spiritual and it resists the spiritual action. This defines its role as the denying term in the cosmic triad deity-vitality-materiality. Secondly, matter is the inert state which can do nothing for itself. These are two different aspects. Standing in opposition to the spiritual—which we suppose is the uniting, vivifying principle—matter is lacking in order and is not able to give itself form. It is the element of chaos, randomness and uncertainty. If we supposed matter to be totally inert, nothing could be done with it. Everything would be completely determined and predictable. This is how we study the material world, but we must remember that if it were absolutely so, nothing could happen and there would be no possibility of shaping our environment.

4.1 Nature of Materiality

The laws of matter are different from those of life. None of life can be understood unless purpose or direction is taken into account. The leaves that the tree puts out every Spring cannot be understood by some cause in the past. They are there because the tree has to take in air, water and sunlight to provide material for its own growth. There is a purpose in leaves. Trees in very wet places have large leaves in order to evaporate a great deal of water and in dry places they have small and thin leaves. We can understand why in some climates leaves fall off every year, and in others they are evergreen, only if we see the purpose behind it. This is not relevant when considering laws of the material world. We do not try to find out the purpose behind the stone falling to the ground, or of the rotation of the earth. We look for the origin of these motions in the past. We look for causes. If we know the past history of something, we can predict its future, as we can predict the motions of the planets a hundred, a thousand, even a hundred thousand years hence. But the essential character of life is that we have to understand it in terms of what a given process is for, what is its direction.

If the material world were entirely predictable, there would be no room for life nor for any spiritualizing action. It would be an utterly conditioned, closed region of existence and there could be no living organisms, mind or any evolutionary action. So matter is not entirely the subject of causal or determinate

laws, it has a side that is connected with life and the higher worlds. In physical sciences we know that strictly causal laws do not apply in the way we expect when we get to very small things. It is not possible to tell how long a particular atom will continue to exist as it is; it might disintegrate in the next minute or remain unchanged for millions of years. Determinism applies to only very large aggregates. We see a house that has fallen into ill-repair. The stones are cracked and some of the pillars are fallen and pieces have fallen off. This will go on happening if there is not a very expensive intervention. Without doubt, the stone-work will fall to pieces. But it is impossible to tell when a particular thing is going to happen. There are too many factors involved. We cannot tell how long a particular stone will last. Also, we cannot tell what the consequences will be. A stone may fall off the roof and fall harmlessly or kill someone.

Therefore in matter there are two things: the inert nature of matter and its uncertainty in its relationship to the rest of the world.

The materiality we are after here should not be confused with Gurdjieff's "Everything is material." It is possible to say that everything that has some kind of limited existence is material. Thought is material in that sense, also feeling and sensation. The term I use for that is not matter but energy. There are different levels of energy. There is an energy of consciousness. Everything that exists is some form of energy. Goodness is not an energy, it is a quality; it has no limitations and does not exist. It only comes into existence when somebody manifests goodness. So there are nonexistent qualities and the different kinds and forms of energy which exist. Matter and materiality in the sense I am using these words mean nonliving or hyponomic. This is only a part of existence.

It is not even true to say that matter has weight, "occupies" space and endures for a certain length of time. This is true only for the actual state of matter. There are also potential states which do not belong to space and time. Thus, in physics, an important role is played by the concept of "potential energy" which allows us to take into account states of matter which are not directly observable. There are both potential and the actual states of materiality.

Life does not belong to materiality. This is at first hard to grasp because all we see are living bodies. Our body provides life with an instrument. If we were to die, the body would be the same, though nonfunctioning. It would have the same weight and composition. So life can separate from the body. Apart from the presence of life in it, the body behaves just as other material objects do. It has shape and weight, actual and potential energies—e.g. energies stored up in the fats and sugars which can be converted into energy of movement.

Matter is everywhere, but it is not everywhere the same, just as life is not everywhere the same. There are gradations of materiality. We can start from picturing the existence of solid matter on the one hand and air on the other. This suggests something of the fundamental polarity between inert states lacking in free energy and active states which have a lot of uncertainty about them.

The basic polarity of the material world is Uncertainty-Causality. This gives us four states as follows:

	Elementals	Uncertain-Uncertain
ARUPA	Transformables.	Uncertain-Causal
	Untransformables.	Causal-Uncertain
RUPA	Inert States.	Causal-Causal

4.2 Predictability

Sometimes it is said that the aim of science is to be able to predict more and more about what will happen. It is also said that the test of a scientific law is in its success in leading to accurate predictions. For the purpose of science and technology we try to eliminate all uncertainty and arrive at things we can know. The causal aspect of matter is what enables us to know about it and gain control over it.

There are limits to what we can calculate. Sometimes things are just too complicated but in other cases there seems to be an inherent uncertainty. It turns out that this uncertainty is also necessary for our being able to deal with them. A piece of metallic crystal can be hammered into a shape, it can melt and so on. These things are largely due to the fact that it is not a perfect crystal. There are flaws. The crystal structure has holes in it and it is this that gives the possibility of a flow for then there is space for a movement. Of course in a lump of metal there are billions of flaws and its behavior can be predicted because of the averaging of large numbers; but one cannot tell exactly where there will be a flaw, just as one cannot tell when a particular piece of the building we spoke of will crumble away.

In all probability, there are no absolute laws as once was thought, not even for something like gravitation. As we come to make more and more accurate measurements, the more unusual, unexpected and unpredictable things come to light. The apparent reliability of the laws of gravitation is produced because we look at the behavior of the solar system over an infinitesimal part of its duration. Accurate observations do not go back more than three or four hundred years and this earth itself is four thousand million years old. Tiny little changes in the way the earth rotates or the moon moves when spread over a million years can become quite important. Nobody really knows, for example, why it is that Ice Ages occurred on this earth.

So it does seem likely that there is always some element of uncertainty in every material system, whatever scale it is on. The material world is a combination of the causal and the unpredictable. This gives a number of different levels of materiality, which we have indicated in the table above.

4.3 Perversity

At the top we have the intangible forces that are not living, yet can enter our awareness. For the most part, people do not notice them... In a lecture he gave in 1923, Gurdjieff introduced them under the name of elementals.

Elementals are not living. They are not beings or individuals. They are the uncertainty of the world and they affect human life because we are living our lives in the material world. The elementals are the spirits of materiality or the unmanifested powers of the material forces. These have no consciousness. When we discussed the nature of life I spoke of the spirits of living things—tree spirits, monkey spirits and so on. There are also the spirit of the mountain, the spirit of a river, and the spirit of the sea. In the times when going to sea was a very dangerous thing, people still could not resist its call, the "love of the sea." They felt the sea was something attracting them, more strongly even than a woman; and they would leave their women in order to go to the sea. We can be aware of the elemental force in a great storm. Though it lasts a short time, we can be aware of its effect on the psyche.

One of the strangest elemental forces is connected with money. Why does gold have such an extraordinary effect on the human psyche? There is something in this elemental that attracts people. There are rarer and more precious metals than gold. There are other ways than the use of gold to arrange for the exchange of money. And, further, some of mankind's oldest and most beautiful works of art are made in gold.

Gurdjieff emphasized in his lecture that some of the elementals are hostile towards life: war, pestilence and famine. They have no form but can act on us. The force of war is something different from the desire to kill and before it people do not know how to defend themselves. In famine, there is a force that is not the same as hunger. People feel an extraordinary kind of helplessness in front of it, as they do before an avalanche, a storm or an earthquake. Something happens to one's psyche that is out of all proportion to the physical things that are happening.

Then there are the beneficial elementals such as rain. Rain has a decisive action on how people are able to live. In dry climates where month after month may pass without a cloud in the sky, there is an extraordinary feeling when the moment comes when there is a possibility of rain. When rain is overwhelming—as in monsoon—everything has to stop because the rain has taken control. In Roman mythology there appears Jupiter Pluvius, God as rain. Temples were built on mountain tops to the power of rain. All life is affected by the uncertainty of rain.

Apart from the great elemental forces there is in all matter something beyond what we are able to touch and measure and calculate. Sir Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote a delightful essay called *The Innate Perversity of the Inanimate Object*. Everyone can recognize how it is when an inanimate object suddenly begins to behave in a perverse way. It would be quite wrong to call it alive or conscious, yet something is unmistakably working that is capricious. Sometimes,

things just will not come right and at other times, it is the exact opposite. These widely known experiences are not just changes in our subjective state. There really are elemental influences. We need to be sensitive to them and know when it is possible to oppose them and when it is necessary to submit to them.

4.4 The Usable and the Edible

The bottom term of the tetrad is just inert dead matter, totally passive and predictable, totally imprisoned in causal laws. This is never perfectly exemplified in any concrete material object, but it is towards this state that natural science tends to look. Between the lowest and highest term, there are two intermediary states and the difference between them is of great interest. It is based on transformation. We speak of the transformation of matter or of energy and we say that we depend on the transformation of energies—for our experience, our development, the formation of higher bodies. Here the transformation of matter is of vital importance to us and, to some extent, to everything living. But not all matter is capable of being transformed and in this is the difference between the two intermediary states.

An obvious example of matter that can be transformed is food. Food is not alive—it came from life, but life has departed from it—yet life has left it in a state that is capable of being eaten and transformed. We can look around the material world and divide it into what we can and what we cannot eat. What we can eat must be capable of responding to higher energies. Gurdjieff gave the example of the difference in "intelligence" between a raw potato and a cooked one. Only the cooked potato is food for a man: in it something to do with the highly complex structures of starch has broken down and in this loss something has been able to enter. It now has the property of responding to the digestive juices in our body and can be taken through all the stages until it is assimilated into our bodies.

The example of food does not cover all the ground. We need to look at the world of human artifacts. Wood can be used as wood and made into things and is a typical nontransformable. The nontransformable level is the level of usable matter. But there is also a use of matter, particularly in the production of works of art, that is a transformation. A work of art belongs to the transformable region because it has something of the formless world in it. It has a power of its own. This is intimately connected with the power in matter of producing sensations for us.

In the case of the potato, we can recognize the action of fire in making the transition from the nonedible to the edible state. The raw potato has a very high degree of order in it to conserve the potential required for germination through the winter. Then life works in the moment of germination like the fire in the moment of cooking. In both cases, what is done is to introduce uncertainty into it. By disordering, there is a chance for life to penetrate the potato.

The technical term "nontransformable" can be quite well replaced by the common word "thing." Things can only be changed from the outside. This world manifests largely through thinghood which is preeminently *rupa*. Things

have form and their main character is their form.

4.5 Materiality as Denial

Materiality is the totality of situations that are without intrinsic reconciliation. All such situations are inherently passive. They depend for their very existence upon the action of the environment. All things that are incapable of independent initiative belong to the tetrad of materiality. Materiality enters into all the existence of the cosmic denying force, but if it meant no more than the operation of causal laws it could not be reconciled with any cosmic affirmative. That is why we must suppose that in the material tetrad there is an element of uncertainty, some incalculable factor.

There are really three aspects of materiality to be understood. Firstly, that it is the field of operation of laws—partly causal and partly uncertain—which determine all events in the existing universe. Secondly, it is the substance of existence, the fact of facts, the source of all valid knowledge, the material out of which everything is made. Thirdly, it is the passive element of all experience, the source of evil, and suffering, the denial of consciousness—in a word Satan. There is a Satanic aspect in matter.

To express the cosmic character of uncertainty we have used the word "elemental", meaning that without shape or pattern. Elemental nature is not organized, nor does it have the coherence of thinghood.

The second member of the tetrad is given by the balance of disorder and order that makes possible the arising of consciousness, the working of the laws of nature in such a way as to leave out freedom but at the same time produce the conditions for it. In each of the three tetrads, the second member is the channel through which a cosmic power flows. In the tetrad of deity it is the transfinite fount of being. In the tetrad of vitality it is the reconciling action of the spirit. In the material tetrad it is the power of return to the source, the fundamental cosmic source through which life is manifested and consciousness is made possible: food.

The third member of the material tetrad consists of things passive in their essence which have no potentialities for transformation and cannot be assimilated into a living process without first being disorganized. Things are just what they are.

The fourth member is the inert state. Whatever is dead in an organism or consciousness comes under the forces of destruction. Death and evil are the twin aspects of materiality viewed from the standpoint of self-perfection. The Selfhood that surrenders itself to the material forces becomes a mere thing. In human life, the fourth member represents imprisonment by fate.

Discussion

Something that hardly anyone sees at this moment is that power over the material world is slavery to the material world. Power and slavery are inseparable from one another. The man who has power is the slave of his power, unless he is able to see for himself that it is not in any true sense a possession.

Q. In that sense, could you say that it was evil to bring about change passively into the material world, to affect things passively and not actively, unconsciously and not consciously?

Yes, I would. It is the difference between conscience and egoism. Egoism acts in us to make us passive. Conscience does not strive or cry; it elicits from us an activity. This may seem very strange, but to try and make the world better by force is the manifestation of egoism. An example in our lifetime was the attempt of the Nazis in Germany to make the world better by force. For the most part they sincerely believed that they were working to make the world better, but they used means that were incompatible with doing good.

Q. Can you say some more about understanding the formless side of things?

This is the important thing. We need to grasp that everything we can think about belongs to the side of form even if it is something we cannot see without eyes. If we take again the example of the raw and cooked potato, the difference between the two that is visible to us is not what matters. There is far more difference between various inanimate things than there is between the raw and cooked potato, even in its chemical properties. The essential difference is that the cooked potato can be assimilated by man. This is not something measurable. When we are concerned with buying or selling raw potatoes then we are concerned with size and weight, the visible appearance, whether they are young or old and so on. The raw potato is a state of matter where the side of form is predominate.

There is the visible world of nature which we can know through our senses. Here we have form and function, size and quantity, but measureableness is, of course, not so significant as it is in the material world. We have to start one notch higher in looking at life. There is a visible pattern of life in which we can see the roles of green vegetation, insects, animals, microorganisms and so on. We are coming to know more and more about this.

Then there is what happens inside of life—the patterns of sensitivity and the kinds of experiences associated with living things. Here the formless is already important but it does not predominate. Each species has its own pattern. Rudolf Steiner strongly emphasized that, with the exception of man, it is not the individual but the pattern of the species that we do not see that determines the balance of nature. The specific pattern belongs to the *alam-i arwah* the spirit world. They still have form. The experience of a cow is quite different from the experience of a sheep. The inner world of living things is not formless.

When we pass over into the unconditioned, life begins to find its unity. The separations of living things gives way to the unity of life or the whole potential for evolution and involution. It is no longer a matter of patterns in the sense that that is how it is for the horse, that is how it is for the sheep and so on. Above the line separating the *rupa*, formed, from the *arupa*, formless, there is something intangible that we cannot know about. There is a mystery of life that enters into everything according to its kind. It is easy to see in the cat family—a tiger is a tiger but there is always something mysterious about them.

They have a strange kind of feeling reaction but one can never say why. Here the formless predominates over the formed.

We have something in us that can respond to the formless. It is connected with our own freedom: if we persist in wanting to know and have things brought into focus we are throwing away our own freedom of perception.

When it comes to the totally unconditioned aspect of life, the Cosmic Life Principle, we can find ourselves in great difficulty because we are bound to picture it as the apex of the living and regard it as the source of all living things. We can have pictures of the Life Principle producing living forms like the egg produces a hen. This is not right. Or we may think of the metamorphosis of the caterpillar into the chrysalis and the change into the butterfly; but this is not a true transformation because it is all there already, and is all there in the egg from which the caterpillar comes. What life will be is not already there in the Cosmic Life Principle. The formless worlds are beyond causality, determination and predictability. The Cosmic Life Principle represents something not predictable, something which is being drawn to become something not already prepared in advance. Evolution is more than development. True evolution is going into the dark. The Cosmic Life Principle is the darkness into which life will enter. It needs the living, it devours it. Because it is empty it does not mean that it has no power. It is a very great power. It acts on all of us.

When we look towards Deity we must realize that everything we can know about or even represent to ourselves belongs to the side of form. If we think of God as a being, that is already giving form to God. Similarly if we think of God as dharma. Anything that can be the object of belief must have form. There is no point in being asked to believe in something that has no form.

It is easy to see that forms exclude one another. The Buddhist belief in dharma, the working of laws and the theistic belief that there is a supreme being exclude one another. If we insist on the absolute unity of God, this excludes believing in God as a trinity of persons. But if we are able to turn ourselves toward that which has no form then there is no longer any possibility of contradiction, because contradiction can only exist between forms.

Q. During a recent vacation I went to a meditation which had music played on a piano, cello, and recorder and three women in the middle dressed in different colors making slow movements with their hands. I was watching this and found it very beautiful, but also felt a sense of danger. Sensation came into my body seemingly as a protection because the effect was hypnotic. This seems to tie up somehow with what you were saying about elementals.

The completely formless term of each of the three tetrads has a power of attraction. In Sufism, they use the term *jazba* for this attraction. It is easily pictured as the feeling of a precipice. You look over the edge and something pulls at you to throw yourself over. It is the attraction of the void—not always destructive, it can be creative. For thousands of years men have been attracted by the sea, now we are being led into reaching into space, all from the irrational

pull of the unconditional. There is something in us that wants to get away from conditioning.

In war—I have seen the outbreak of three or four wars in my life—there is an irresistible attraction, even though people detest it. There is something in it of a projection into the material world of that which draws us eventually to return to our source, the real *jazba*. If this were not working on us to draw us towards the unfathomable, there would be no way for us to go against the stream of involution. It does not act like a cause. It is not in order to achieve a result. We mix it all up, but the real attraction is towards the void, the unpredictable.

What you were talking about has to do with beauty. Beauty is a technical term used by the early Christian writers and it appears also in *The Philokalia*. When the Shivapuri Baba was asked whether beauty can draw us towards God, he said: "Never. Not at all. Beauty only leads us to the beauty of God, not towards God." Many of the desert fathers knew very well how beauty could come in prayer and meditation, in beautiful images, beautiful movements and rituals. They, like the Shivapuri Baba, also say that in the spiritual life, beauty is a dead end. It will not lead us beyond itself. One's reaction then is liable to be: "Well, in that case, ought everything to be ugly?" which is obviously a silly idea. Beauty is a value in its own right. It is to be respected for its own sake. It is a true manifestation. But if we are to get beyond manifestation, then we must not be allured by beauty. In the spiritual life, beauty must be kept subordinate. Beauty keeps us back in the *rupa*.

One of Alice Bailey's books was called *Clamour*. She says a great deal about the inadequacy of beauty and its misleading action in the spiritual life. When beauty occupies the wrong place it is this "glamour." When there is a representation of something essentially spiritual by some outward form there has to be very great care.

I once saw an Indian dancer who reached a perfection I had not seen before, but she produced in me a very powerful feeling that what really mattered was that the dancing was an embodiment of a tradition. Somehow or other she managed not to attract by her own beauty or the beauty other movements and everything was made so impersonal that one really forgot that it was a woman who "was dancing." That was a right subordination of the conditioned to the unconditioned, the visible to the invisible, beauty to the spirit. Beauty is a right garment to be worn, but we must remember that it is a garment and not the reality.

How is it that perfection of form seems to bring us out of the conditioned world? The Benedictine Order is very much concerned with perfection in the ritual of the Mass, making every gesture with perfection and the singing and chanting perfect. Sometimes I have felt—in certain monasteries—that they are caring too much about it all being perfect; but there are times when the perfection is by the way and it is simply that the inner reality means so much that it needs this kind of perfection. In the same ritual the experience can be

totally different without us being able to recognize any tangible difference. Where the difference comes from is in the *arupa*, the formless.

In the chapter "Skridlov" of Gurdjieffs autobiography *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, Father Giovanni tells the story of the two old monks, Brother Ahl and Brother Sez, who visit the monasteries of the Brotherhood to preach to the monks. One speaks with such beauty and eloquence whereas the other speaks haltingly, shows all the signs of old age, and can only be followed with difficulty. But the one who is difficult to follow leaves a permanent impression whereas the eloquent one creates an impression that evaporates as soon as he has finished. We need to cultivate in ourselves a feeling for the formless, for the invisible; otherwise we will tend to be caught by the glamour of the visible.

Q. Can your scheme of energies be made to correspond to Gurdjieff's table of the hydrogens? In his table there is a constant relation between one and the other. There is a doubling of numbers. In your scheme of energies there are three parts and I do not see where the break between them fits in.

COSMIC	E1	Transcendent
	E2	Unitive
	E3	Creative
	E4	Conscious
VITAL	E5	Sensitive
	E6	Automative
	E7	Vital
	E8	Constructive
MATERIAL	E9	Plastic
	E10	Cohesive
	E11	Directed
	E12	Dispersed

I understand the question. One great difficulty I had was understanding what Gurdjieff meant by hydrogen 12. [E4 in Bennetts scheme] In a talk that he gave about the hydrogens that I once heard it seemed that hydrogen 12 was consciousness. I asked myself whether I could control the energy of consciousness, whether I could be conscious at will as I can move or think at will. At first it seems that one can—it is not easy to see what it is really like. Or, if I say we cannot make ourselves wake up—the flash of consciousness just comes—you might say that our attention can hold on and we can keep ourselves conscious, at least for a time. Then it might seem that the energy of consciousness is not so different from the energy of thought. But in the authentic experience of consciousness, it is possible to see that consciousness is something you are in and it is not something in you: you are conscious because you are in a sea of consciousness, not because you have your own consciousness. When I talk

about it, I compare it to light. We can choose what to look at, where to turn our eyes, but we have no control over the light. If there is light, we see. If there is not, we do not see. The only difference between light and consciousness is that consciousness is there anyhow. What happens is that we sometimes get into the world where consciousness is, but we do not know how we got there or how to stay there.

When we speak about self observation people at first only observe themselves in the way that Gurdjieff put it: "You not observe. One center observes another." But the time comes when one realizes that observing is going on and it is not possible to say whether we are observing or being observed, somehow or other we see, when it comes to things like consciousness and real observation, that our identity is not what we think it is. It was from this sort of realization and a close study of what Gurdjieff says in *Beelzebub's Tales*—where he does not speak of hydrogens but of the different oeharies—that I saw beyond any doubt that consciousness is beyond life. Once I saw that, everything fell into place. I saw that consciousness was universal and sensitivity particular. Then I found that it was already in Gurdjieffs scheme which I heard only once. We were all very tired, but fortunately I made notes. Gurdjieff would never say another word about it but: "Think, think!" I thought for the last fifty years about it.

Gurdjieff mainly used the table of hydrogens for talking about the lower matters. He spoke very specifically about food, air, and water. If you notice, neither in *Beelzebub's Tales* nor in *In Search of the Miraculous* does Gurdjieff really say very much beyond hydrogen 48.

Q. I still cannot connect the qualitative distinction you made between the material and the living with the quantitative scheme of the hydrogens.

This is an important question. In Gurdjieffs scheme, he called hydrogen 384 water, hydrogen 192 air, hydrogen 96 animal magnetism and hydrogen 48 thought. We have already referred to hydrogen 12 as consciousness. These correspond to my energies in this way:

HYDROGENS		ENERGIES	
NAMES FROM GURDJIEFF		NAMES FROM BENNETT	
H12		E4	
H24		E5	Sensitive
H48	Thought	E6	Automatic
H96	Magnetism (or fire)	E7	Vital
H192	Air	E8	Constructive
H384	Water	E9	Plastic
H768	Food (for man)	E10	Cohesive
H1536	Food (for animals)	Ell	Directional

Now, the question is why is there a quantitative step between H384 and H192 that gives a reason for putting a line between them? It is clear that without water there would be no life, at least not life as we know it. Every living thing is predominantly made out of water. Therefore to exclude water from the tetrad of life must appear very strange. But what role does water play in life? The most important we know is in the blood. Blood is certainly alive. But it is not the water but what the water carries that makes blood so extraordinary. Even if blood is dried, as we now know, it can retain many of its powers, enough to give life back to people. Also, you can keep in touch with a person's kesdjan body through his blood even if it is dried. So the living aspect is not the water but something else in the blood. It is the same with all the bodily liquids, as it is with water on the surface of the earth: it is the carrier or medium.

Now, what about air? Is not air also just a carrier or medium? No—because even in the simple sense, air is assimilated. We take oxygen out of the air that we breathe and return carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. It is not just incidental that the atmosphere of this planet has been produced by life, that is through green vegetation, that we have this enormous quantity of free oxygen.

This we feel in the *rayu prana* meditation. It would not be the same if we meditated on water. You can easily picture yourself meditating on blood. I think that I could meditate very well upon wine. One might think that the extraordinary feeling one has about air is due to the fact that we cannot live for more than a few minutes without a fresh supply of air, but that is only partially true—there is something more about air, something more intimately connected with life.

There is a sharp break between water and air. We go into a different world. Whereas water is the top of the inanimate world, air is the bottom of the world of life.

Q. What was it that Ouspensky really meant when he talked with such importance about "great matter?"

Ouspensky had the attitude that matter was in some way "evil." He certainly had this more than Gurdjieff and it is very obvious in his book, *Talks with the Devil*. There is a connection between matter and evil, but what is it? One way of defining evil is that it is work with the wrong energy. Put like that, it has a very wide application and makes evil a concrete notion of something we can look at. For example, prayer requires the energy of consciousness otherwise it cannot serve its purpose which is to connect us with the spiritual world.

What Ouspensky was after was that man by his nature does not need to be under the laws of the material world. If he allows himself to be governed by these laws, he is using a wrong energy. If a man allows himself to be dominated by material objects, he is putting himself on the level of material things. Though I never heard Ouspensky say so, I presume he would have put the notion of "great matter" on the level of the elementals, or as "the" elemental. A point to remember is that Russian thought was dominated by Manichaeism—dualism of

matter and spirit—long after it had died away in other parts of the world. It survives even to this day and it is something you need to realize in order to understand many things that happened in Russia and which are happening and will happen.

Q. People talk about "acts of God." In the Bible there is the Flood. There are earthquakes. Does this fit in with what you said about the perversity of inanimate objects; such things as mining things that are new and spoiling things?

This is a big question. Perhaps we can say that the unpredictable element in the material world is capricious and meaningless. But you are asking about events which are unpredictable and disruptive from the human point of view: are these just blind workings or is there something which cannot be explained either as a cause or a purpose? The story of the Flood is very remarkable. God is represented as having lost patience with the human race and deciding to destroy it. Then He saves Noah and afterwards, when He sees the destruction, repents of His act and places in the sky the rainbow as a sign of His pledge to mankind. The story does not make sense in an ordinary way. But behind it, what is being conveyed is that a capricious action can be fruitful and creative, much more so than something which is held by a purpose or aim.

It is a subtle and difficult thing to grasp. The creative power works in a way that is free from the need to have order. It is free to be capricious, it is free to be fanciful. When one looks at nature one is convinced that the creative power is fanciful and has a sense of humor. One cannot take everything in nature seriously.

Our way of looking at things as either having a cause in the past or a purpose in the future is restricted. There is something that cannot be reduced to those terms, which particularly applies to the world of life. This is *the* reason why it is so very hard to understand the genesis of life. If we say life came into existence to fulfill a purpose, then it all looks very incompetent. If we say it all came by just a blind causal action, it is unbelievable. Looking at it in this way, some kind of light, a totally different way of looking at things, comes. "Acts of God" are not to be understood in terms of dependence on causes or on the need to accomplish some purpose. This is terribly hard for these people who think that the only way you can make sense of things is to find out what they are for. People ask: "Why did God create the world? He must have had some purpose." Maybe He did not. Maybe He had something more than a purpose and quite different from a purpose. Maybe He just wanted to have fun!

THE CREATION OF LIFE

The creation myth of Genesis is such a magnificent picture that it has been

sufficient for people until very recent times. It was probably put together at the time of the Babylonian captivity and came from a tradition that even then was old. It is really an account of the creation of life, not of the earth, and it presents a picture of a transition from a state of chaos to a progressive ordering that culminates with a sexual being. The transition is ascribed to the action of the Elohim, the powers of God, not to God, or Jehovah who is not mentioned in the first chapters.

The main creative work is one of separation or partition. Out of the primeval chaos, the *tobu nabobu*, the light is separated from the darkness, the firmament from the earth. The partition makes possible an action between the separated parts that is fruitful, because out of their blending comes something they did not have before their separation that comes from the creative act—the separation of the fine from the coarse from which something new can come. Genesis speaks, in the language of its time, of the principle of the law of threefoldness: the higher blends with the lower to actualize the middle.

5.1 The Nonmaterial Domain

In the scheme of the Creation that I developed in *The Dramatic Universe*, Vol II, I began with showing how the partition and blending brought about the transition from the Unfathomable Source to All Existence. The point we have to grasp is that if there is a partition or separation between two states, these can combine to give at least two main intermediary ones. If oil and water are mixed, there will be two distinguishable phases, one of water suspended in oil and another of oil suspended in water. Existence is something that can be described and is completely predictable, while the unfathomable is something that cannot be described at all, and is totally unpredictable. We are sure that that of which nothing can be said, the unfathomable, "contains" that of which everything can be said, existence. This gives the conditions for a true partition—that in its turn provides for blending.

The Unfathomable Source—Indescribable

The Transfinite Reality—The describable in the indescribable

Limitless Being—The indescribable in the describable

All Existence—Describable

Put in this way, the four terms represent just a structure of states; but it is also possible to represent them in terms of stages and this corresponds more closely to the ancient images that one may find.

The first step is from the Unfathomable Source to the Transfinite Reality. The latter is now to be regarded as all being and all non-being prior to separation. In this sense, the transfinite "contains" limitless being. Non-being is "not substance" and is beyond meaning. It is this that corresponds to our feeling of some totally unconstrained source that can enter the workings of this world. The second step is the separation of being and non-being.

Stage 1	Unfathomable Source	
Stage 2	Transfinite Reality	
Stage 3	Being	Non-Being

The third step is the separation with being of the possible and the impossible. Here it is that we can speak of laws. Laws are understandable as the selflimitation of will.* What is possible exists and what is impossible does not exist.

The third stage is a commitment to a limitation. We can also regard Existence as a condensation or coagulation of being. There is a loss of freedom, but a gain of knowableness.

Existence means everything that it is possible to have in experience. This includes everything that is visible and everything that would be visible if one were in a place to see it. It also includes everything that we can deduce as being there even if we do not and cannot directly observe it, such as potential states.

What is happening in our immediate range of vision is not the whole story

Stage 2	Transfinite Reality	
Stage 3	Being	
Stage 4	All Existence <i>all possibilities</i>	Non-Existence <i>all impossibilities</i>

because what has happened in the past and will happen in the future are in some way within the range of our knowledge. We have records of the past and we can make predictions about the future. In principle, we could know everything that has happened and will happen in the material universe. We can also include all the things that might happen but will not because there is no room for them.

* cf]G. Bennett, *Existence*, No. 2 of "Studies from *The Dr^matic Un^verse*," Coombe Springs Press 1977. [Out of print. Available in Fall, 1999 from Bennett Books.] These self-limitations are like the "rules of existence." They can only be inferred indirecdy from observation. Space, time, eternity and hypacds are the ground rules described as "determining conditions."

This distinguishes All Existence from the knowable Universe. All Existence belongs to the divine tetrad and the way that time steals away from existence is not taken into account. What is possible is not the same as the facts of the case. The knowable universe is existence *in fact*, not in possibility. It consists of states of aggregation of hyle the primal material substance.

The world of possibilities is not material and it is so fall that we can hardly have any conception of it.

TETRAD OF DEITY

Stage 1	Unfathomable
Stage 2	Transfinite Reality
	Non Being
Stage 3	Being
	Impossibilities
Stage 4	
Stage 5	Universe

5.2 From The Universe To Life

The step from All Existence to Universe brings us to what Gurdjieff calls the first cosmos or the protocosmos. Our present-day picture of the universe is vastly different from that of the authors of Genesis, but our modern knowledge gives us a way of understanding partition, as it operates in the existing world or universe. In Gurdjieffs language, there is a separation between states of materialization—what he calls "cosmic concentrations"—and unmaterialized states. Physical science presents us with a picture of the universe as consisting of concentrations like stars and planets and great collections of stars we call galaxies which in turn are grouped in families and societies. The whole thing is so enormous that our galaxy which we see as the Milky Way is but one of many thousand million within reach of our telescopes. There is also the unseen part of the universe commonly referred to as "empty space" and which, for all practical purposes, is empty. For example, there may be just one atom within a region of a cubic mile. But nowhere is there no atom at all or, at least, no energy at all. There is an enormous amount of radiation and various states of matter

intermediate between particles and radiant energy which amount to an energy and mass equivalent to that concentrated in the galaxies and stars.

The separation out of concentrations gives rise to the important distinction between whole and part. A concentration is a recognizable part of the whole universe. In *The Dramatic Universe* this was presented in the following scheme.

SECOND TETRAD OF CREATION

The Universe.....Wholeness as such

The Galaxies.....Parts within the Whole

The Stars.....Wholes within the Parts

The Planets.....Parts as such

What happens in the step from Universe to Galaxy is a separation between the galactic concentrations and extra-galactic matter. The galaxies are "similitudes of the whole" and are sometimes referred to as "island universes." The significance of the uncondensed side of attenuated matter and energy is not obvious and in all probability very little of it is at present accessible to our understanding. We do not know what kind of consciousness or mode of higher being there could be that does not require association with a concentrated material state; but in the experience of homeopathy there are some interesting indications of the importance of attenuated states of matter. Homeopathy is based on the powerful action resulting from exceedingly small concentrations, which is so contrary to anything one would expect from the behavior of matter that many people find it impossible to believe. What is particularly interesting is that experienced homeopathic doctors will use concentrations of 1 in 10^{30} , that is, one part in a million, million, million, million, million which turns out to be the concentration of matter outside the earth's atmosphere within the orbit of the moon. The potencies used can be as extreme as 1 in 10^{1000} which is equivalent to emptying the whole universe of everything except one atom. How then do we know that throughout the universe there may not be patterns of far higher and freer intelligence than anything possible on planets or even on suns or galaxies? When we take into account the higher energies of consciousness and creativity we are not bound to think of their action as being bound up with great

concentrations. We must realize that we know as good as nothing about the universe. It may be something far more integrated and extraordinary than we have ever supposed.

The galaxies themselves are extraordinary structures holding hundreds of thousands of millions of stars each of which is the essence of a complex aggregation such as we see in our own solar system. We can only suppose that if there is an intelligence associated with it then it is an intelligence of a kind that we simply cannot conceive.

Within the galaxy itself, there is a partition between the concentrations we know as stars and the vast amounts of uncondensed matter and energy that exist throughout. In coming now to the stars—like our own sun—we can return to the first chapter of Genesis. The sun represents the seventh stage in the Creation and is the beginning of anew cycle. Really, what is beyond the sun is unknowable to us. We can therefore understand why Gurdjieff calls the sun deuterocosmos or second cosmos. The first, the universe, is beyond us.

Stage 5

Universe (Protocosmos)

Stage 6

Galaxies

Extragalactic Material

Stage 7

Stars

**Uncondensed
Matter and Energy**

Sun (Deuterocosmos)

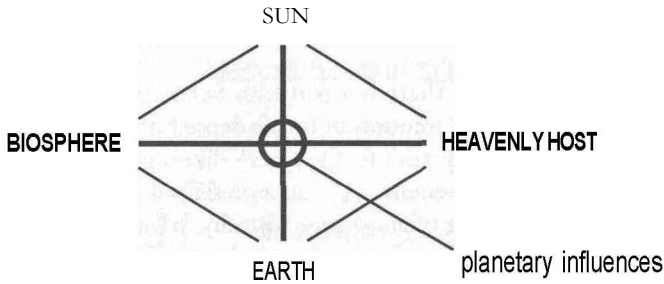
The deuterocosmos is a secondary creative power and it receives its power from an absolute source. The sun manifests its power particularly in relation to this earth. If we take the two terms sun and planets then again between them we find two intermediary states.

Firstly, there comes between sun and earth (or planets) what in Genesis is called the Elohim and in the writings of Dionysius the Aeropagite on The Celestial Hierarchy is called The Heavenly Host. Gurdjieff himself used the latter term which figured very strongly in the early Christian liturgies* as All the Company of Heaven.

As we said at the beginning, the Elohim who appear in Genesis represent

*The liturgy was a very remarkable construction for which a group in Cappadocia is largely responsible. It was probably put together in the third century and in its structure of three parts probably derived from the old Zoroastrian liturgy. Gurdjieff claimed that it was one of the most extraordinary legominisms in the world and all the secrets of the universe are contained in it.

the working of the third force. They unite the creative power of the sun with the generative power of the earth; the sun as Father-Creator with the earth as Mother. From this union there comes a third creation, the biosphere.



People take these ideas figuratively because they cannot accept them for what they literally mean. Even when they refer to Mother Nature and speak of nature as an agent doing something, they say that this is simply a convenient way of talking. Such an attitude of mind began in the eighteenth century and now the depersonalization of the creative process has taken possession of human thinking. This has put us right out of harmony with nature and has been the cause of many of our aberrations. The difficulty is that to treat the sun as a creative power in the sense of a conscious creative power is not only repugnant to scientific thinking but also to religious thinking—because it seems as if we are returning to some kind of primitive sun-worship and treating the sun as God. The sun is not God, but it is a creator, particularly the creator of life. In the same way, this earth of ours is not simply the source of physical and chemical actions induced by the energy received from the sun but is in a quite literal sense, the Mother of Life, who bore life in her womb, gave birth to life and nourishes and loves and cherishes life.

With our present scientific knowledge of the universe we can see that though the sun represents a very high level of being, it cannot be the body of God who created the whole Universe. And also, in our scheme, we realize that the creative energy is not the highest energy there is. Beyond it there is love, and beyond that there is a transcendental working.

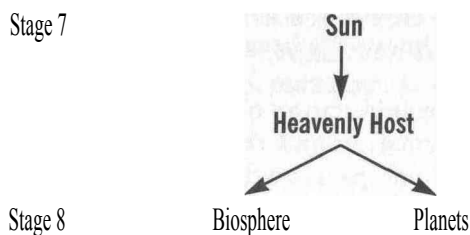
When it comes to the Heavenly Host, it seems that there is an additional difficulty due to the fact that we cannot see them as we can see the sun and the planets. But we must remember that from our perception of the sun there would be no means of deducing that this was the manifestation of a creative power. The Heavenly Host is one spirit in many manifestations. They are high in the spirit world, the *alam-i arwah*. We can discover them and find evidence of them if we really look at the biosphere of our earth. This life is not just a utilitarian machine. There is so much play and so much beauty in it. About a hundred million years

ago the spore-bearing vegetation gave way to flowering plants and with them came all the insects which are part of the reproductive cycle. If all that was asked for was an efficient evolutionary process to produce the higher primates and man, then all of that was a waste of time; and it has persuaded people that evolution cannot be guided intelligently, for so much was devoted to the creation of "purposeless" form. This attitude gets it round the wrong way. It is this very beauty, fantasy and recklessness that is characteristic of intelligence. I think the long period of favorable climate was foreseen and it was realized what could emerge in the millions of years and be completed to make life as extraordinarily beautiful as it is. If one can enter into this vision of life, look in this way at the beauty and wonder of life around us, one can come into rapport with the kind of intelligence that made these experiments.

We can meditate on the task of evolving bodies which could sustain three brained beings. This task was far more demanding than simply producing viable self-reproductive organisms. We can hardly begin to see how very extraordinary is the apparatus we have as human beings.

5.3 Life and Materiality

Life is an independent creation. It is something more than a stage in the main sequence. Therefore at this point we look along the path of life and treat the planets as significant only in so far as they play the part of the environment of life. The work of the Heavenly Host divides into two, one part of which is the creation of life.



The biosphere has the three-fold structure; vegetable, animal and human which probably exists in a corresponding way on every true planet. In Gurdjieff's language, the planets are tritocosmoses and living forms tetartocosmoses. This is the meaning of the notion that "life came out of the earth." We do not know how it is with the planets themselves, but the planets as a whole do play an important part in creating the environment of life. It is possible for us to become aware of the various planetary influences in the air we breathe. If the earth is the Mother of Life, then the planets influence the formation of Her children as the human environment influences the child. Life receives an important part of its forms and possibilities from the other planets of the solar system. This carries

right the way through to the fate each one of us has. The way in which life arises from the triad of Sun, Heavenly Host and Earth is influenced by all the other planets that are not taking part in this particular creation.

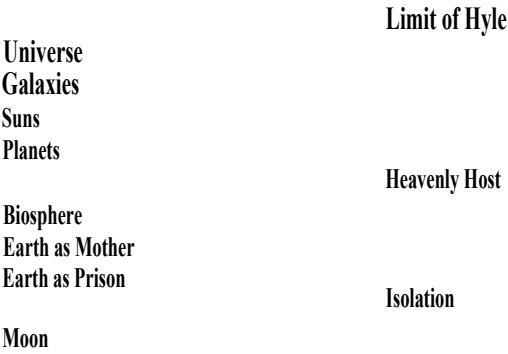
The earth presents itself to life in two quite different ways. We have said that it is literally the Mother of Life; but it is also the imprisonment of life. The earth, the visible earth, is a material body and through it life becomes incarnated in bodies. In the disembodied existence of the spirit would—*alam-i arvah*—there are no laws of gravitation which limit the size and shape of bodies and the second law of thermodynamics does not apply. The materiality of the earth brings life under the law of separateness. Ordinarily, we are not aware of what this means; we have to meditate on it, rather as Buddha taught his followers to meditate, especially on the impermanence of the body. In this state of existence, we come out of the earth and return to it and find our experience is very restricted because we are so subject to separation and successiveness.

In Vol. I of *The Dramatic Universe*, it seemed highly probably that a planet existed on a higher level of organization than even a true man. The biosphere was described in that book as a transitional region between the level of man and planet. Here "man" signifies the culmination of living existence.

A planet as a being is higher than the life upon it. In Vol. II of *The Dramatic Universe* I called the planets "abodes of the Heavenly Host." Yet the surface of a planet such as the earth is a place of very restricted existence. This is earth as "life's prison." Between the two conceptions is that of the earth as bearer of life. It is important to grasp these three aspects of a planet.

If we combine the creation and existence of life with the major creation we have a seven-fold structure. The Heavenly Host appears as the enabling factor which integrates life and the planets. What lies beyond the universe we do not know. We have put the "moon" below to signify ultimate materiality.

Earth as life's prison is the manifestation of the denying principle. It is through this that transformation and return to the source are possible. Earth as life's mother simply passes on the creative process through life and does not provide the way of return.



It is very important that we understand that nature loves us. We also have to be able to see the "heavenly" working in the natural world. Many people claim that our experience of this in nature comes entirely from the conditioning of our perceptions. This is just not so. They are direct perceptions of a creative work, the play of the Heavenly Host. This play is wonderfully expressed in Proverbs 8. There Chokmah—Wisdom—tells how She was with God in the creation of the world, how She played before Him and through Her play the world came about and how she rejoiced to play with the sons of men and God rejoiced also. We need to accustom our minds to this vision, we need to free ourselves from the attitude that the only creative imagination there is, is in man. In the working of nature, there is a creative imagination far surpassing anything of man.

As the creation goes to the end, to the lower limit of existence, we enter the domain of materiality where separation becomes the rule. It is the realm of dependence and isolation, and in Gurdjieffs cosmology is symbolized by the moon. The transition to the moon is through isolation which takes the creation into materiality*

Commentary

There are three parts to the Creation.

First Part:

Spiritual or nonmaterial, i.e., there is no component of hyle, the material substratum. Where there is no hyle, a possibility can be both actual and potential. This means that all possible sequences of events are equally real. In what we observe in the universe actualization is at the expense of potential. The copresence of all possibilities, what is called all existence is vastly greater than the universe. The first part of the creation begins from the Unfathomable Source, sometimes described as the Godhead, sometimes as absolute nothingness. It is beyond being and will.

Second Part:

Material but capable of relative freedom. The domain in which intelligence can work. The domain within which the independent creation of life began.

Third Part:

Material and subject to isolation. Materiality is the denial of spirituality.

Each of these three parts has four components. These arise from a partition that divides the ultimate principle from its least "component" and a blending of the two that evokes two intermediary states.

* Materiality was associated with the Adversary in *The Dramatic Universe* Vol. II. This does not mean that there is an evil being. It is, that conditioning leads to a state of isolation in which nothing can be done. Not all materiality is utterly inert. According to Gurdjieff the "moon" can evolve into a planet. The transformation of matter belonging to evolution begins in materiality, but only above a certain threshold. Below that threshold is death without return and the "outer darkness."

Quality does not exist and is therefore impossible by the "rules of existence" or laws. In Chapter 35, Bennett explains how there are different kinds of essence—such as animal essence, crystalline essence, and so on, which are far more than their existential supports. Essence corresponds to nonexistence but is in the world of limitless being.

The division of possible from impossible is "according to law." The laws are self-limitations of will which originate in the Transfinite Reality. It is through these that finite centers of consciousness are possible. The realm of All Existence is really the realm of all possible finite experience.

A similar analysis can be made for the other two parts of the Creation. Here we will only mention the separate consideration of the creation of life. In Ouspensky's writings this is described in terms of a lateral octave branching off from the main octave or Ray of Creation. Gurdjieff described it as the inner completion of the main cycle of Creation; the outer completion ending in the "moon."* The terminology of four cosmoses from Gurdjieff has a particular intent which should not be missed.

PROTOCOSMOS: Universe. In Vol. I of *The Dramatic Universe*, which deals with the world to the exclusion of value, it is given the attribute of autocracy: an affirmation without a superior.

DEUTEROCOSMOS: Sun. The sun in Vol. I is given the attribute of Creative Wholeness; free creative power within its own presence.

TRITOCOSMOS: Planet. Has the attribute of subcreative wholeness: capable of exerting an affirmative force towards life.

TETARTOCOSMOS: Living beings. Associated with the attribute of self-directing wholeness.

Each of the four has a certain independence. What has been described above deals with this independence from a factual point of view. When value is included, we have the Protocosmos as the Sun Absolute, the Deutercosmos as Father Creator, the Tritocosmos as the Abode of the Heavenly Host and the Tetartocosmos as manifestation of Divine Compassion, an independent expression of the Reconciling Force.

* Reference should be made to J.G. Bennett *Talks on Beelzebub's Tales*, Weissen 1993, pp 85-6.

EVOLUTION

One of Gurdjieff's most famous aphorisms runs, "To know means to know all. Not to know all means not to know. To know all it is necessary to know very little, but in order to know this very little it is first necessary to know pretty much."

It is the whole that matters and only the whole that can be understood. We are constantly being concerned with parts of our life or parts of our nature, parts which distress us or give us joy, parts that we want to hold onto. Perhaps we can come to see that there is no power in any part; only the whole has any power. If we can begin to see our lives as a whole there are many benefits. We can become free of the greater part of the anxieties that trouble people in life and we can then see what is really worth doing. We can even begin to answer the question: "Who am I?"

We can try to look at the existence of this earth as a whole. The planet is great enough to be seen as a whole. The smaller things are so interlocked with one another that it is difficult to disentangle their wholeness. For example, life on this earth is difficult to disentangle from earth, sky and water; humanity is inseparable from the life on this earth and the destiny of this planet. Also, when we try to look at man as a whole, we can see only the life in this body. So very much of man is not visible but we are bound to miss the wholeness of man if we leave the invisible side out of account.

For some reason, knowledge of the history of this planet has been revealed to us, suddenly, during the last century. I use the word "revelation" deliberately, even though the revelation did not come as we suppose revelations always come, that is, as an inspired utterance in the way the Quran was revealed. The inspiration behind knowledge of the earth came through tens of thousands of people who contributed to the picture we now have of the life of the planet over a period of three to four thousand million years.

To be able to see this life as a whole, what we need to do is to put ourselves in the place of the intelligences that presided over the earth's history. This is a quite different thing from interpreting the facts in order to build up a picture just of the order of events.

The intelligences are called in the language of *The Dramatic Universe* demiurgic, and they transcend the distinction of one and many. When we sit in

a room with other people it is only by a feat of imagination that we can think of ourselves as one. For the intelligence that guides great events one can just as well talk of one as of many, because in the one is the many and in the many is the one. In the Wisdom of Solomon, the language is magnificent.

*"For in her is an understanding, spirit, holy,
One only, manifold,
Subtle, lively,
Clear, undefiled,
Plain, not subject to hurt,
Loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot
be letted,
Ready to do good, kind to man,
Steadfast, pure, free from care,
Having all power, overseeing all things,
And going through all understanding,
pure, and most subtle, spirits. " **

The demiurgic intelligence surveys the earth and is aware that something has to be accomplished: there is a task originating from a higher source. This earth can be seen among the planets of the solar system as having exceptional possibilities apparent from the start, because of the position of the planet relative to the sun, the immense amount of water that was available, and the heavy gaseous atmosphere which permitted an extraordinary stability of conditions. What is to be done with it? Let us suppose the demiurgic intelligence realizes that the best that can be done is to make this earth a scene of intelligence and for that there would have to be bodies or modes of existence in which intelligence could be incorporated. What then?

The primitive earth was very inert in the chemical sense. The gaseous envelope was largely made of gases which were pretty inert at terrestrial temperatures, like nitrogen and carbon dioxide. Therefore the atmosphere would have to be changed. The earth's surface was either water or rock in equilibrium with the atmosphere, with which little could be done.

A potential for transformation had to be introduced from outside of the earth. The only source could be the sun, a prodigious reserve of energy and active materials. This potential needed to be brought into the earth so that there would be more active and less active forms which could combine to produce new forms. Something was needed capable of changing the atmosphere, the surface rocks and the oceans.

The vision involved is to be measured in terms of thousands of millions of years. Probably, some two thousand million years ago certain chemical complexes appeared—mainly at the interfaces between water and land and water and air—that were capable of transforming earth, air, and water through the energies of the sun. Over a very long time, at least five hundred million years, there was a

**The Wisdom of Solomon Chap. 7. The "het" referred to is Wisdom which is the same as the Demiurge.*

gradual transformation by which enormous quantities of oxygen were liberated from the carbon dioxide of the atmosphere and carbon was accumulated on the earth's surface and in the waters in more accessible and reactive forms than before. With the action of wind, waves, and sunlight, there emerged the active layer on the land and in the seas. The active layer had powerful catalytic properties and could cause and accelerate chemical transformation—mainly because of the property of enormous surface-to-volume ratios that makes available high surface energy concentrations. The active layer did not come directly from the passive surface but through the medium of substances which were protoplasmic but pre-living.

The real entry of life was in the cell. It is inconceivable that a mind like ours would be capable of seeing the potential of life in the form of cells. Cells are the simplest wholes that in an extraordinary way reproduce the wholeness of the earth. With the entry of the living cell, the evolution of life began, because with it came the beginning of sex and reproduction.

So far, we have described four steps.

- 1. When the earth itself took shape and was provided with water and atmosphere.**
- 2. Transformation of the earth's surface and oceans to become active instead of passive.**
- 3. Appearance of primitive forms of life, pre-living forms.**
- 4. Appearance of cells with their sexual reproduction.**

Each of these was a point of development once they had been created, but the transition from one to the other was in each case a manifestation of an extraordinary intelligence. We can hardly picture how it was possible for the self renewing surface layer, the primitive noncellular blue-green algae or "primeval slime" to come about. And the step to cellular life capable of sustaining characteristic patterns, sexual reproduction and orthogenesis was not simple elaboration of pre-cellular life.

Stage 2	developed into soil and oceans
Stage 3	developed into vegetation
Stage 4	developed into the primitive animals, the invertebrates with their millions of different species, the richest form of life on the earth.

The next task for the Demiurge was to find a way to introduce intelligence. At first there could not be any individualized intelligence, only an intelligence of species and populations such as those of the beehive and the ant heap. For there to be individual intelligence there had to be a way of storing and concentrating the sensitive energies—such as sensation, feeling, and so on. This required a means of concentration which was found in the nervous system of the chordate

animals who eventually developed into the vertebrates. Then there is an organized sensitivity, a capacity for perceiving and responding to the world and having a life capable of adaptation. This was the beginning of the spiritualization of the earth.

The fifth stage is only very crudely describable as the appearance of animal life. What was important was the appearance of a responsive experience of the kind we can see in fishes, birds, reptiles, mammals and of course in man.

The next stage is the introduction of an independent intelligence with creative consciousness. This must have been foreseen at the time of the transformation of the earth's surface. The Demiurge would have had to ask the question: "What is this for? To what is it going to lead?" At the moment—quite literally—He would have been preparing the soil for what was to come. He must have looked to man, to the kind of intelligence that was possible under terrestrial conditions.

The whole thing would depend on the property of adaptation that is associated with sex. In the image of man would be the image of sex. This thought is put into the book of Genesis. And where does one turn for sex? It is to the cellular. Therefore from the image of man comes the need for the cellular form of life.

Then it could be seen that in order to produce a human form all varieties of experiencing had to be made possible and this came with the astonishing richness of the animal world, the world of organized sensitivity. Man himself requires something more than intelligence and this means that the cycle is completed from a higher level than the Demiurge. Then the earth fulfills its purpose.

All that we have said can be put into the enneagram (facing page).

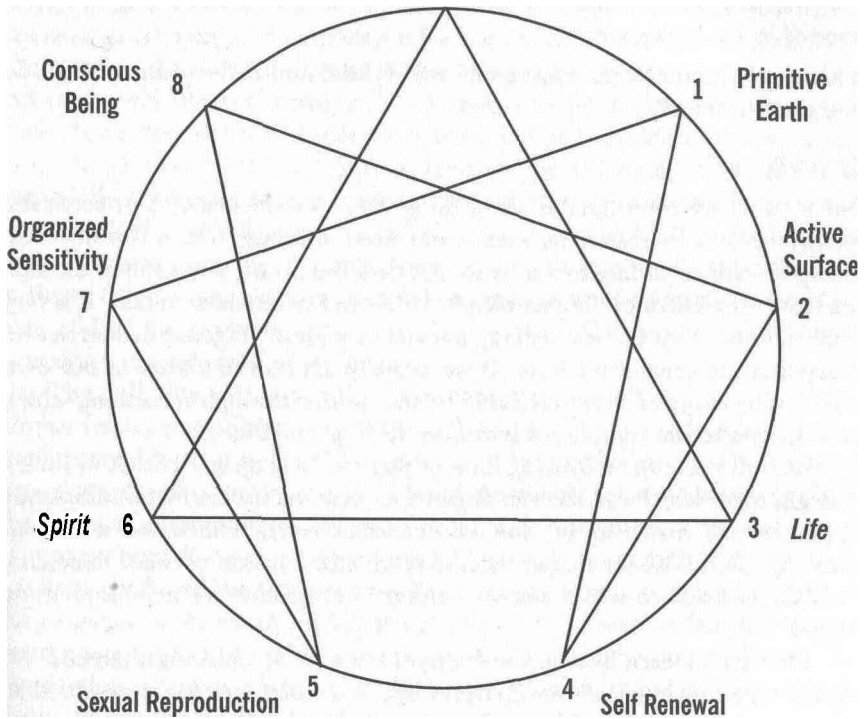
ENNEAGRAM OF EVOLUTION

the points of the six-sided figure are as follows:

- 1. Primitive earth..... wind, waves and rocks;**
- 2. Self-renewal..... algae and, later, vegetation;**
- 3. Active surface..... oceans and soil;**
- 4. Conscious being..... man, leading to unknown forms;**
- 5. Sexual reproduction.....the cell, leading to the invertebrates;**
- 6. Organized sensitivity.....the vertebrates, leading to the mammals.**

The inner lines we mentioned are:

- 1-4-2: In order to have an atmosphere with oxygen in it, which was the key to the living whole and not present in the primitive earth, there had to be the action of self-renewing forms.
- 2-8: What is it all for?—in order to produce beings with intelligence. We hope that something better than man will develop at point 8.



8-5 From the notion of man comes the notion of sexual reproduction, which requires the cell.

5-7 From cellular life animals come.

One can see quite well that the soil, the atmosphere, the state of the oceans would not have been possible unless there had been, for hundreds of millions of years, a transforming action. It is hard to say whether the action was living or nonliving. The chemical complexes involved did not have any of the characteristics we associate with life—no responsiveness, no cells, no sexual reproduction.

The sexual side comes from anticipation of man, Gurdjieff calls man *keschapmartnian* or two-sexed. It is only because we are divided into two sexes that we have all our potential, both evolutionary and for transformation. The whole of the right side of the enneagram is without sex and the whole of the left is with sex.

Discussion

Q. How, in fact, does the Higher Intelligence bring all this about? You spoke about such things as each species having its own pattern—is this part of the Intelligence or is it imposed by the Intelligence?

There is one point on the enneagram which I did not label—point 9. What do you think is there?

Q. Intelligence?

No. Intelligence overrides the whole thing. Point 9 is the material, or better still energy, because by matter we mean some kind of energy which is condensed. Energies exist according to a scale so that they can act on one another through the law of threefoldness: higher blends with lower to actualize middle. It is very important to grasp that the energy associated with intelligence cannot act on everything. It needs a medium. If we want to act on the matter of our own bodies the energy of attention has to be transmitted through something which corresponds to the energies of sensation, feeling, and thought.

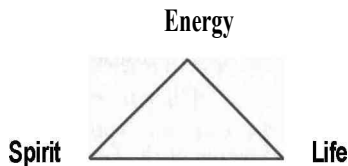
We can make the following kind of picture. Intelligence creates in itself a thought form which can have an organizing effect on matter that is sufficiently responsive; this matter in turn can act on coarser matter. This is how it is in our own experience. We see that in order to reach coarse matter we need something intermediate and to make that something intermediate we need something higher.

We have to learn how to use energies because we cannot act directly. We do not need to know about energies because instruments are provided in ourselves. We work though energies automatically and also consciously through attention and decision. There is no reason to suppose that the Higher Intelligence works in any other way. One might say: "If there is such a high intelligence why does it have to go through these long and complicated processes lasting such a long time in order to arrive at a being like man? Why did it take hundreds of millions of years to prepare the earth for life? Why could it not have been decreed that this earth should be provided with a ready-made atmosphere of oxygen and nitrogen and so on and with a surface already active?" The answer is that the world is not like that. Everything in time requires time and involves a process. Only when we get away from time altogether do we get away from process.

People can also ask: "If there really is such an intelligence and it is guarding the affairs of the world, surely -we should see clear evidences of it, not the record of trial and error which seems to stumble along?" Certainly, the evolution of life on this planet is far from providing evidence of infallibility, but -we should not expect it. Let us look at our own selves. We do not see our own "I", we cannot put our finger on the higher perceptions and it is easy to say that they are all fiction. When we wish to start working in a way that corresponds to our higher reality we have to approach it in the manner of "as if—as if there was "I" and

so on. Why is this? Because our ordinary intelligence and experience of life are sufficient to tell us that this life is not satisfying and we do not have answers to any of the questions that matter to us and we see no way out of it. So we have to start by giving the possibility of transformation the benefit of the doubt. We can have no certainty about this until it has been achieved, perhaps not even then. But if we try to live our lives as if there were a possibility of attaining to a different world, different perception and so on, then we find that evidence does come. If we stop and say: "I will not make a step until evidence comes" it will never come. If we make the step, evidence begins to come. Finally the time comes when we are confident and can trust our lives entirely to the presence in us of a higher intelligence. It is the same with this world. It is quite easy to deny that there is any higher intelligence, because there is no direct evidence of it. But in that case, our common-sense should tell us that the situation is hopeless, man and all his works have to perish. We can go forward as if there were guidance and then we find evidence.

The difficulty is that people either expect too much or too little of the Higher Intelligence. They expect too much when they say: "If there is a Higher Intelligence, let it put the world right then we shall believe in it." This demand does not make sense in terms of the laws of the world. What we have said about the action of energies upon one another has to do with the fact that the higher cannot act directly upon the lower without something intermediary that itself has to be produced from somewhere. To break this law would mean to destroy the existence of this world. When people expect too little it is that they do not see the significance of certain powers like that of creating thought forms. We can develop in ourselves a certain power to control energies and produce thought forms. What the Higher Intelligence can do in this way is one step up the ladder. The Tantric Buddhist monks of Tibet could produce thought forms so solid that they could be touched. The Demiurge can produce thought forms that can transform the surface of the earth.



But even this Higher Intelligence is limited. In the enneagram, there are the three elements: Energy, Life, and Spirit. Life is something beyond energy. It is not just a form of energy. Spirit is again different, it is not material, it is really will. Life is something between energy and will, it is a mystery.

The forms of energy which make life possible can be brought about by the creation of thought forms, but life has to be borrowed from somewhere else. The Demiurge could produce the mental image of what had to be brought into being. It could see the need for a self-renewing form that could transform

the earth and water and prepare the way for life. It could see what being was ultimately destined to evolve (a very much greater being than the kind of people we are). But the vision comes "from above," it is not something created from the Demiurgic Intelligence itself. The Intelligence is instrumental. It is responsible for the various steps but is not their ultimate source. I believe this source to be divine compassion. This compassion comes from beyond the sun!

It was Virchow who said "*Omnis Cellula e cellula*"; every cell comes from a cell. How then did the first cell arise, how did it come about that life enclosed itself in a membrane and was able to maintain itself in a different state to its environment, unless there was a thought that guided it?

The Higher Intelligence is not infinitely different, but one step higher than us. It is as much ahead of us as we are of a frog. And in relation to what man will become *-we* are like a frog in relation to a horse.

Q. You mentioned that the sexual dyad at the left of the diagram made possible the divergence and selectivity necessary to bring about the development of man and this also implies the next evolutionary jump. Could you say something about that?

Life on this planet will remain two sexed, even with the further evolution to come. But, as it is said: "In heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage." We can have the feeling that our nature as man or as woman is an inherent part of our nature and there is nothing beyond that, but it is not so. But what is beyond is very difficult to grasp. There are some teachings which assert that there will arise a race of men on the earth that will not reproduce sexually. My own seeing of this is that going beyond the dyad of sex cannot take place in this planetary existence—it belongs to a higher world.

There will be beings with powers that we have only in a very rudimentary form—just as the nervous system of the frog is rudimentary compared to that of a horse. But many millions of years were needed to make the transition from the amphibians to the mammals and we do not know how long it will take to realize that full evolutionary potential of intelligent beings on the earth. However far future evolution goes, I do not think man will cease to be keshapmartnian, that is, a being which is completed by the union of the sexes. The union of the sexes leads beyond.*

Q. While I was eating today, I was thinking of the food being taken in, broken down, and built up into animal and man. With the making of a thought form there seems to be a substance taken in and at the same time something being created outside; the building of something inside and the building of something outside. I get a picture of the demiurgic being creating something inside himself or creating something outside himself. If we make a thought form is that the energy that goes into the thought form or is it the result of the thought form?

You see, you cannot bring it into focus. It will happen that we see things obscurely—but not falsely. Seeing obscurely is a step towards the vision where

* cL, J.G. Bennett. Sex. (Samuel Weiser: 1991.)

things can be seen as they are. If you try to bring some shape into it so that you can think about it or speak about it, you are bound to do something artificial.

I am able to tell what kind of thing you saw, but if I try to clarify it for you it will not bring us nearer the truth. It will bring another veil of words and will not remove the obscurity which is there because you cannot see clearly.

This is very important for everybody to understand. We will have insights that we know to be important but we cannot get them into focus and we shall be tempted to force them into something. If we think: "Now I am seeing something" we are really seeing less, not more. If we are patient it will come into focus. The man cured of blindness was asked: "What do you see?" He said: "I see men as trees walking."

Q. Is the further evolution of man now in man's charge? Does it now depend on us?

It depends more on us, but it does not depend entirely on us. We have simply moved one class up from the kindergarten where everything depended on the teacher. We are not yet graduated.

Q. Do you think it was the aim of the demiurges that it should depend on us?

Yes. For a long time they have been "handing over." It is a mark of the transformation of man that he can become responsive for his density. But it may even be as it is with a child—one puts tools into his hands so that he can learn to use them, though he can perhaps cut himself with them.

Q. If there is going to be a race of horses rather than frogs will they be able to solve problems like starvation and overcrowding?

You have not understood what I am saying. I am not talking about the next hundred years in which such problems have to be solved. It is reckoned, so I believe, that it takes hundreds of thousands of years to establish a new mutant with one percent advantage. Tiny changes in man will occur and little by little these tiny changes will bring about a considerable change in the whole of human life, just as the development of the power of speech thirty or forty thousand years ago produced enormous changes.

The problems you talk about will be solved through a very small change that will occur through people developing slightly in their sensitivity. We try to produce this change—which is a very small alteration in the balance between taking and giving—by work on ourselves. It will take only a minute change of that kind to solve the kind of problem mankind is faced with today. There will be other problems to come—consequences of that change.

Q. How does Gurdjieff's scheme of objective reason, up to the Sacred Anklad fit in?

Gurdjieff says that when the energies of the world were balanced and the common cosmic *ansanbaluiazar*—everything issuing from everything and again entering into everything—came into operation, a scale of reason was established. He talks about the gradations of reason as corresponding to the degree of self-

awareness and the degree of justification of the sense and aim of the individual's existence, his role in relation to everything in the megalocosmos. There is, I believe, some correspondence between the gradations of objective reason and the gradations of energy. The scale of reason is pictured as a measure between zero reason or "firm calm" and the absolute reason of His Endlessness. But in the particular examples Gurdjieff gives there is a sort of foreshortening. The Sacred Anklad is said to be third in degree from the absolute reason of His Endlessness but it is the highest any being can attain. This probably means that it is in the second level down from the highest state of World 1 or the Unfathomable Source and belongs in World 3 of the Transfinite Reality. Beelzebub's reason of the degree podkoolad is last in gradation before the anklad and is said to be very rare in the universe—so when the fifth fork appears on his horns, even the angels prostrate themselves, the reason of the venerable arch-angel being one degree lower, that of the degindad.

It is very probable that the sacred "Podkoolad" corresponds to the bodhisattva, the perfected being of compassion. Beelzebub is presented as a being who, having started by revolting against injustice, finally frees himself so that his essential nature of compassion is revealed. The Sacred Anklad is the step beyond to what would be called the Buddha, the absolutely liberated being.

Knowledge about these parallels does not matter very much but it is important to realize that these notions of higher gradations of being and going beyond being are not exclusive to one religion or teaching. They were taught in America before the coming of the Spaniards. There are inscriptions about this dating back to five or six hundred B.C. Either there was a very extraordinary communication that we know nothing about, or something was revealed all over the earth.

Going back to Gurdjieff's scheme, he also talks of three kinds of being reason in the presence of three-brained beings. Their degree of realization depends on being-partkdolg-duty. The first is the pure or objective reason which is something concrete only when there is a higher being body. This means that the barrier between the *nupa* and the *arupa*, the formed and the formless world has been broken and there is always access to higher gradations of reason and to higher energies—the cosmic energies of consciousness, creativity and compassion. The second being reason okiarta-aitoksha corresponds to the presence of the kesdjan body, and the third, automatic reason, to the planetary body.

Q. Are there some things that we (an understand but the demiurges cannot? Are they in some way jealous of us?

In the Quran it is said that the angels bow down to man except for *Iblis*, but I do not think it is quite like that. I think there is conflict between two aims connected with the need for order and the need for change. Gurdjieff over and over again states the idea that higher powers were so concerned that no troubles would occur that they did not foresee the consequences of their precautions. This

has been the cause of so many of our troubles. It was not a matter of malevolence or jealousy but that they had a limited task to do: to make sure that nothing went wrong. They put this task first and compassion second and did not take into account the suffering that would come from that. Gurdjieff also categorically asserts that there is something higher from which compassion comes, but that it is not entitled to do the work of the orderly powers: it has to do the work of compassion within the limitations set by the need to preserve order.

Gurdjieff's account of the fall of man does not ascribe it to malevolence but to the limited understanding of the powers concerned with the order of the world. It can be said that they act without compassion because compassion is of a higher order.

Now your question was whether men could understand something that the demiurgic beings cannot. Again, according to Beelzebub—at the end of the chapter on "Electricity"—no one can understand the sufferings of another unless he has experienced them himself, even if he has a very high intelligence and the "nature of a devil," which for Beelzebub is a very high thing.*

All of that is said by Gurdjieff. For myself, I cannot see. I can see the working of the demiurgic intelligence, as clearly as I can see the working of human intelligence. But I do not see whether it is compassionate or whether it is just getting on with the job assigned to it and that compassion when something goes wrong comes from above. I cannot see as far as that, but I know compassion is necessary. One has to be able to see for one self why compassion is necessary, and that this creation would be impossible otherwise.

GLOSSARY

TABLE OF SPECIAL TERMS

CANTOR	BENNETT	SUFI
N	All Existence	<i>alam-i ajsam</i>
X ₀	Limitless Being	<i>alam-i arvah</i>
X ₁	Transfinite Reality	<i>alam-i imkan</i>
X ₂	Unfathomable	<i>lahut</i>

TYPE OF	ASPECT OF
CONSCIOUSNESS	MAN
consciousness-of	personality
satori	essence
samadhi	individuality

dam: Arabic word for "world"

-i *ajsam* of bodies: of quantity and separation

-i *arvah* of spirits: of essences and identities

-i *imkan* of possibilities: of individualities and communion

aleph: first letter of Hebrew alphabet used by Cantor to designate transfinite numbers, numbers "beyond counting"

zero X₀ infinity without regard to how it is arrived at

one X₁ all infinities including their uniqueness

two X₂ all orders or arrangements of infinities

animal magnetism: term used by Gurdjieff to describe Hydrogen 96, which m Bennett's scheme is E7, vital energy

arupa: without form, the unconditioned

autonomic: having its own laws; middle term of the triad hypernomic—autonomic—hyponomic

baqa: Sufi term for resurrection after "death," *fana*; being; substance; opposite of emptiness

beauty: technical term used by Desert Fathers to designate misleading attractions of the Spirit World

being: what is—limitless—the second world free of the limitations of existence

Cosmic Life Principle: unknowable source of all that lives; darkness into which evolution progresses; also known as "Great Life Force"

demiurge, demiurgic essence: intelligence higher than man, not embodied, yet limited and fallible

dharma: literally "will of God"; also the intrinsic pattern or "rightness" of anything; conies from the third world and is connected with destiny; when projected into the second world is "as ye shall sow, so shall ye reap" of Karma

elementals: spirits of materiality, beneficent and malevolent; entirely unpredictable and without intrinsic coherence

essence: unconditioned side of anything

existence: conditioned side of anything; subject **to** limitations of space and time and other determining conditions (eternity and hypands)—all: all that could possibly be actualized

fana: annihilation; emptiness

fanai afal: extinction of belief that one does anything; marks transition to third world

fanai zat: extinction of belief that one has ever been anything at all; marks transition to ultimate world

food: what can be transformed

God: there are four modes of Deity: as an existing presence; as the Supreme Being; as the source of Love and Compassion beyond being; as the unfathomable nothingness or Godhead

higher being body: term used by Gurdjieff to describe the substance of the will in transformed man, that can go beyond the spirit world into the world of reality

higher centers: centers are modes of seeing; the "higher emotional center" leads us into the second world and the "higher intellectual center" leads us into the third world

hypernomic: above laws; the affirmative term in the triad hypernomic—autonomic—hyponomic

hyponomic: below the laws; the denying term in the above triad

hyle: the pre-existent substratum of everything that exists; its only attribute is the state of limitation

individuality: the singular character of will; a possibility for man; counterpart of life

ilraq: Sufi term for absolute liberation from existence and dreams

jazba: Sufi term meaning "spontaneous attraction"; usually used in the context of attraction towards higher worlds

karma: as ye sow so shall ye reap; principle that every action has consequences that react back on the agent

kenosis: Greek term meaning "emptiness"; used by religious and mystics to designate emptying of self so that God can enter; also used to describe God's emptying of Himself in order to get into the limitations of existence—to become man.

kesdjan body: Gurdjieffs term for the coherent presence of a man in the second, spirit world; needs to be developed in life

labut: Sufi term for totally unconditioned state

mind: attribute of man that goes beyond life

nirvana: Buddhist term for the totally unconditioned state

oeharies: Gurdjieffs root for energies corresponding to different levels of being,
used very much in chapter of "Purgatory" in "All and Everything"

rascooarno: Gurdjieffs term for death; for the perfected man, the first rascooarno
separates the body from the spirit principle or body kesdjan, while the
second separates the latter from the soul or higher being body which can
enter the third world

rub: Arabic word for "spirit"; has a range of meanings from the divine Spirit to
the ghosts of undeveloped people

ruku: gesture of obeisance made to higher principles

rupa: subject to form, conditioned

sacred image: image intentionally created by participants in a divine incarnation
and revelation; it belongs in the spirit world

satori: break through in consciousness from separative consciousness to the
direct awareness belonging to the second world

samadhi: consciousness in which we can see the reality of other individuals;
usually confused with a state of trance

trogoautoegocrat: Gurdjieffs term for the total transformation of substance; by
which the great whole is maintained and renewed everywhere and in
every moment

thing: something which cannot be transformed into something else; of fixed
character; capable of being used

vayuprana: vay in Sanskrit means "void" and vayu unlimited nature; prana is the
vivifying energy or power within air which is everywhere present in the
Universe; the words vayu prana are used in meditating upon air as a spiritual
reality